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FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES

#77

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From the Editor

Rich Black

Mercury Retrograde occurs three or four times a year. I'm not quite sure what that means, but I know it has something to so with the planet Mercury appearing to move backward through the heavens from while viewing it from Earth.

According to astrologers, if you believe in that kind of thing (personally, I can take it or leave it, but it's fun to think about), these periods of Mercury Retrograde are prone to be very difficult for certain people. Computer problems, lost mail, misunderstandings between friends, missing money and general agitation are characteristic of Mercury Retrograde.

Anyhoo, here we are, going into a period when Mercury will soon be turning retrograde, and the astrologers seem to know their shit. The funny thing is, we're not even IN Mercury Retrograde yet (I write this on December 10, still a full week away), and things already suck.

But I'm used to that by now.

WANNA SEND US AN INTERVIEW?

We're experimenting a bit here. *Under the Volcano* is looking for high-quality interviews to publish. We like many genres of music, but Punk Rock generally sets our loins on fire. Call or email us first about your interview ideas. We'll require hearing the band first of course, and have some simple guidelines (below) once you get the go-ahead. Remember, there are no guarantees--we're kind of dicks about the right "mix" of bands for a particular issue, and hafta REALLY like what a band is doing to run a feature.

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Please make the interview informative, interesting, and maybe even funny; questions like "What are your influences ?" are a NO NO! Allow the band's personality to shine through, and don't forget to mention the band's current release. Please follow the general Q&A format within these pages. Do NOT type in all captial letters, and please include an introductory paragraph that runs between 150-200 words. Interviews are to be send by EMAIL ONLY. Cut n' paste the interview into the body of the email, as we will not accept "attached files." Send tons of band photos and graphics, which will not be returned. Yeah, I know, all these

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Columns

MODEL CITIZEN

GREG GROOVY

Worse than the reoccurring tornado nightmares, I dreamt I was at work. I knew I was dreaming because I showed up on time. Which never ever happens. Or doesn't happen often. There's nothing like five hours of sleep that feels like you slept for five minutes; it creates this vibe in your brain that can only be described as being on edge. You're on the brink of flipping out, or smacking the shit out of the dumb clerk at 7-11 who gives you 49 cents change instead of 50.

I hate my job because I can't escape it. I'll be at a bar drinking a pint and some prick comes up to me and wants to talk to me about my job. Shit, you see this pint in my hand. You wanna have it lodged into your whack ass skull? Then run through my miserable work history for me, because I don't know my own nowhere fast pattern. I need you to point this shit out for me. Then to lighten things up, they talk about the other assholes that I work with. Hell, I work there. I know they're assholes. Which is probably why I hate my job, right? So, please do me a favor—shut the fuck up and let me drink my beer.

Now in my sleep the creeps come creeping, seeping into my subconscious.

"Hey, are you a Psychobilly kid?"

The voice asks the question once or twice. I repeat it out loud in a sarcastic tone. As a geezer the question "are you this or that" just seems absurd. I rub my eyesockets—which always burn like hell—and then realize I'm not sleeping. I'm at work, nearly falling asleep on my feet, and there's some guy asking me this question.

This is bad, this is a terrible feeling—both the sleeping on your feet and yes, the put yourself into a Petri dish and label it mentality. I usually describe myself as angry before anything else. What type of records I buy or the pattern on the button-down shirts I wear are last on the list. However, people don't have any interest in what makes me tick; they want to get to what's important: What kind of hair care products I use and where I get it done?

Where are the tornados now when I need 'em? Of course they never arrive. Shit, I wish I had some needles to lunge into my eyesockets because my brain keeps telling me that this is what would ease the pain. Somewhere, in the midst of the static of my own psychobabble, a voice is asking me about shows and some people that I know.

Static, psychobabble... chirps.. shit I'm still at work.

"Hey, so do you go to shows?"

"Babble, goddamn next week starts the 4am shifts. I'm never going to catch up on some sleep. I'll sleep in my car for lunch... uh.. shows?"

I don't remember much after that. I had a craving for two things—pills, coffee. Wait... make that three things. I'm a guy... sex is something that is on my mind all day. Maybe that's what grounds me and makes me want to go through all this misery and suffering. Simply knowing that there's some pie to be had is all I need.

Which is something that I should probably revise and put into a more poetic phrase since my girlfriend is going to read this and think, "What an asshole!" BUT, I know my audience (hah hah) figuratively and literally. They'd be upset if I did that.

NOTES: Some guy named William Strier shot at his lawyer at close range because he felt the lawyer was screwing him. All of this was caught by TV crews covering the Robert Blake trial. It made for brilliant TV. I nearly shat myself. I couldn't help thinking, *This should happen outside courtrooms in every county in every state, every single fucking day. This would keep these rip-off con jobs in check. Lawyers would think twice before billing you some ridiculous amount of money for bullshit.*

I thought *here is history in the making and maybe people will learn by example*. NOPE! The media rushed to the "this guy is deranged" angle. Fuck that! **He was a goddamn hero**! You talk to anyone about lawyers and you'll hear a bunch of horror stories about this scumbag or that scumbag. Unless of course you're Robert Durst or OJ Simpson, but those are entirely different rants all together.

People only focus on the negative—they want to emphasize that using guns is no solution. BUT what if it is the only solution? These do gooders could never imagine themselves in situations so dire that the only way out is to come out firing like a motherfucker. I can sympathize, I truly can.

I recently had a friend receive several death threats on the phone, only to be told by cops,. "Uh, we can't do anything about it because there isn't enough proof."

So that person immediately responded, "Well then I'm going to go and beat the shit out of them!"

What's the cops reply? "You can't do that."

HAH! It's illegal. Which brings me to my closer. If you feel like things are just getting more and more fucked up, you're not alone. The world IS rotten, and it will always be that way.

Doctorate In Unemployment

Shawn Clap

An idling car filling a garage with fumes. A hair dryer resting at the bottom of a filled bath tub. An extension cord tied into a noose. A razor blade sitting next to a sink, watching the warm water turn bright red. Sometimes there is a note. Other times, no note. The Holidays can be tough on a great many people.

Scientists and college-types like to explain this all away. The longest nights of the year, the additional stress factor of the large crowds, that sort of mathematical jerk-offery. It's really about new beginnings. The new calendar year—A reminder that your life hasn't turned out the way that you had hoped it would. You're in the same place you were last year. And the year before. Those poor bastards, they don't make resolutions. They don't join gyms and they don't quit smoking. They opt for the Big Change. A serious New Beginning.

New Year's Day 1998: We were cruising north on California's Highway 1 heading into Oregon. Jack, my buddy from back east, had rented a little car and wanted to visit Portland. Said he knew a couple of girls up there, we could stay with them. Now, I had an old lady in Oakland, but I just didn't think much of her. The prospect of getting into some new girl trouble was appetizing. Especially out-of-town girl trouble. I quit my job at the video store, told the old lady not to wait up, and was cruising north on California's Highway 1, sipping on a (now warm) pint of Blueberry Schnapps. "Here's to new beginnings."

The journey was ripe with anticipation. Jack is a tall, aggressive and assertive fellow. Pretty girls are attracted to him. I was hoping that these would be just another couple of pretty girls. I began imagining just how beautiful they might be. I created stories in my head, personal histories. I imagined how these gorgeous girls longed for a well-read and cultured man—like myself—to come into their lives and sweep them off their feet.

It wasn't until we reached the outskirts of Portland when I started to ask some questions about the girls. Then Jack came clean.

"They're lesbians."

"What do you mean?"

"Y'know, lesbians. Carpet-Munchers. Lesbians."

"Why didn't you say so," I asked.

"I **told** you they lived together."

"Maybe they're bi?"

"Don't be an asshole," he said, "Besides, I've tried. Believe me, I've tried."

Nell and Lizzie were a couple of cool-ass girls. Their house had no heat, but Jack and I did have a place to crash. They had a dog, a young black lab named Lollipop. I could tell they had no idea how to care for a dog. They probably got it as a cute little puppy, but were now burdened with problems of a bigger dog. They would put the dog out in the small backyard, in the cold Oregon rain. Lollipop scratched at the screen door for hours on end.

The girls took us out to a place called The Schoolhouse. It was an old school, recently transformed into a nightclub. Each classroom was a bar with a different theme. The halls were lined with bright green lockers and photos of former students. The cafeteria was now a posh restaurant. The Schoolhouse had gone through with the Big Change.

Nell and Lizzie showed us around town the following day. Not much there, just plenty of cold rain. That evening they had a lesbian self-defense class. So Jack and I stayed at the house and watched TV with Lollipop.

"I think I should walk the dog," I told him.

"Why?"

"To thank the girls for letting us crash here."

"But it's raining," he said.

"You think they have a leash?"

"Check the kitchen."

The only leash I found was a choke chain. I didn't know how to put it on Lollipop.

"How do I attach this," I asked Jack.

"Around the neck," he said.

"This dog doesn't even have a collar."

"You don't need a collar with a choke chain" He slipped it like a noose around the dog's head. "You just pull on it and it tightens around its neck"

"Won't that hurt?"

"Do I look like a vet? How should I know?"

So I took the girls' spare umbrella and off we went into the rainy night, with Lollipop leading the way. That dog must not have been walked in a good long time. She was overly excited, running every which way. Across lawns, in the middle of the street, under parked cars and into bushes. She'd dig muddy holes on the neighbor's properties, then shit on the sidewalk, then make a mad dash towards the end of the block, turn left, turn right and run again. I couldn't keep up. I would pull the choke chain, but that only seemed to make her run faster. I lost my footing more than once on the slickened street. As for the umbrella, it was long gone.

That bastard dog was relentless. Howling in the rain, trying to jump fences and making me wish I had just stayed indoors and watched TV. I begged, I pleaded, I bargained and I pulled on that choke chain like it was a tug-o-war. Me vs. that dog's neck. Pulling, pulling, pulling...then it stopped. Lollipop laid motionless on the wet grass of some lawn. I tried calling her. I tried pulling the chain. No response. *Oh shit*, I thought, *now I've done it.* These girls step out for a couple of minutes and I go and kill their dog. Had my entire life been building up to that moment? That's not how I had imagined my life turning out. Would 1998 be the year of: Shawn Clap: Dog Killer?

I got down beside Lollipop. I didn't know CPR, but how hard could it be? Before I was able to get my hands on the dog's chest, she slipped out from under me and took off running down the street, the choke chain dragging behind her. It was no use. I would never catch up.

I sat on that lawn for a good 10 minutes, in the rain, in the dark, in the cold. I didn't know where I was. I had been outwitted by that bastard dog. I started wishing I had killed it. Then I didn't know which would be harder to explain to the girls—that I had killed their dog or that I had lost it.

It took me 15 minutes to find the house and I only found it because I recognized the rented car. Next to the car sat Lollipop. She was waiting for me. I stroked the wet hair on her head. She was sorry. I was too. I took the choke chain and we walked up to the house. She slept well that night.

Not killing that dog was one of the better things that has happened to me. It was a rebirth. In an instant I came full-circle from fiendish dog murderer to, well, something slightly less despicable. It was a serious New Beginning.

LIP

Keith Thomson

LESS IS NOT MORE!!

"Extra! Extra! Economy Records Speedy Growth!" he says. I picture Dick Cheney ducking under the bill of a newsie cap, resting low on his brow. His clothes are worn and tattered as he tries to blend into the crowd of common folk, but is given away by the shine on his new, leathery shoes. He charges a dollar for the 25-cent paper as he spins his propaganda directly to the street; a devious, devout partisan. He turns a corner and starts to climb into one of a fleet of waiting, black SUVs but is impeded by the extended hand of a beggar. Dick eyes him with reproach, spits into the palm then speeds off, the motorcade's wasteful exhaust engulfing the needy.

The government recently released a report stating that third quarter growth was the largest it's been since 1984. I've mentioned this to fellow workers and friends. The initial, emotional reaction was the same as mine.

"It's a lie!" They responded viscerally, thus giving evidence of the administration's lack of credibility as they maintain an obvious policy of deceit and trickery.

The Bush regime is giving itself accolades and pats all around for the unprecedented 7.4% annual growth in the Gross Domestic Product, crediting the numbers as a direct result of the recent tax cuts for the wealthy. Even though there is this supposed boost to the economy, the rate of employment, once again, fell. How does that happen? How is there more spending with still fewer people employed? Who, then, are these consumers who have so much to spend?

The recent purchasing is largely credited to high-priced sale items, such as: houses, cars, refrigerators, air conditioners, etc. With the jobless rate extremely low and little sign of hope, who can afford to buy another $40,000 SUV, or a new house? We can surmise then that beneficiaries of the tax cut, the wealthiest 2%, are spending their windfall. The theory being that it will trickle down into the manufacturing industry because this spending will create a demand for goods. To meet these new demands, manufacturers will need to produce more product and will need to invest in more capital, such as equipment, and labor, which, of course means jobs for the common folk, who can then go out and spend themselves.

There is one huge hole evident in this "supply side" theory. Over the past three years, we have lost 2 million manufacturing jobs. We can argue that this is at least mostly due to the fact that manufacturing outlets and corporate services are now mostly licensed outside of the US to "developing nations" such as India, China, Mexico and other regions where they can pay their employees a fraction of the wage they would have to pay in the US. So, as far as filling the government coiffeurs with tax revenue, well, there isn't any income tax from manufacturing jobs, because, as I said, these jobs will not exist in the US, and the companies who have all ready received huge tax breaks can still legally set up off-shore tax havens for their now larger profit margin.

The economy hasn't picked up one bit! All the administration has done is fudge the numbers so they can use them for the upcoming election campaign. The old adage "the rich get richer and the poor get poorer" is in full swing. This is another example of the wealthy elite, consolidating wealth to maintain their power.

We have come full swing, back to the age of Robber Barons, who are able to manipulate a market, or an entire region (see Wal-Mart, California), although now, as we've seen with the recent corporate scandals, we don't have a single owner to deal with. We have the anonymous, non-human entity of a corporation, and the only way to combat their insidious nature is to organize the work force! Organize! Organize! Organize!!

www.fuckoff.com

Mr. Noiz

It's about that time of year, for the best of the year lists; there have been some amazing releases this year, and some cool websites to go with 'em.

One of my favorites of the year was The Plot to Blow up the Eiffel Tower. Mixing styles from Nation of Ulysses and the Swing Kids, they have a great experimental Jazz/Hardcore sound. Check out some of their MP3s at http://www.blowuptheeiffeltower.com.

Another favorite of mine this year was The Bronx. Their take on the old style melodic Hardcore sound is really refreshing. Their site is http://www.thebronxxx.com.

Minus the Bear was another favorite of mine. This band has an amazing guitar player that adds so much to the catchy song writing. Producer Matt Bayles is in this band. He has worked with some favorites of our reader base, but this band sounds nothing like what you would expect from someone with the bands he's worked with. Check them out at http://minusthebear.com.

One thing [illegible] this [illegible] ess with bands, labels and [illegible] issues pertaining to MP3s. But one of the problems in the music community is that people feel music is free, so why pay for it? My take on it… I believe in previewing an album, because we've all gotten stuck buying an album and it being a turd. But, if you download an album and like it, you should buy that album and support that band. For example if a band is going to support their new album on tour , and their album sales aren't what they should be, the band has to use their 9-5 money to tour, rather than getting tour support from the label. This hurts the fans 'cause there are less touring bands. Now, all record labels are going through tough times, but the really small indie labels even more so... Which means the smaller bands that don't and won't get radio airplay ('cause radio plays shit music we don't want top hear anyway) get boxed out. So get the fuck out there and support your favorite bands!

Next year, look for a new Two Man Advantage record.... and from what I hear Dag Nasty will be back in the studio again. And now for a good laugh www.ultimatephilcollinstribute.com.

THROUGH A GRRL'S EYES

KELLIE BYH

The term appearances are deceiving is very true. My magazine, *Kunt Savant,* featured a column written by Gloria, the grrl I run the zine with. She wrote about female appearances. She discussed how it's basically a chore and necessity for her (and many other women) to shave, wear make-up and look nice. She talked about that if she doesn't look her best, people frown upon her or think there is something wrong. Like many other women, Gloria believes this social standard is unfair.

Her column got a reply from this guy named Matt, who spoke of an ex-girlfriend that didn't conform to the way women are supposed to appear. He is one of the small percentage of males who don't need a dolled up lady to be happy.

I can understand where Gloria is coming from. I just think women need to start doing these kinds of things for themselves. If you want to shave and wear make-up and take all this time, then make sure you're doing it for yourself. Don't waste your time to make everyone else happy. I don't believe a little eye shadow and fuzzy legs makes all the difference.

I won't lie—yes, I am part of the majority of women that wear make-up. I am not knocking it, I am not saying that people who take a little time to look a certain way are wrong, I'm just saying don't to it to please everything else. We can't waste all our lives striving to make ourselves a certain way so everyone else can be happy.

For the gals that feel the same way as Gloria, just remember that if people can't accept you for what's beneath the mascara and razor burn then they aren't worth it in the first place. I'd even suggest taking time away from the routine and get people used to the real you show them, and make the difference. Maybe you'll be happier this way. It always should be about what makes YOU happy (as long as it's not hurting anyone else). The problem is some people in this world are just too picky. If you think you look good, then fuck everyone else.

Life isn't a beauty contest.

Between the Buried and Me debuted on Germany.s Lifeforce label, then found themselves on Victory Records for their second record, The Silent Circus. This North Carolina quintet plays metallic Hardcore with melody and precision. Myk and I had some questions for guitarist Paul Waggoner. -Black

Between the Buried and Me

Myk + Rich Black

theRedChord
SOUTH EAST
14
I will not be trained

Under the Volcano: Where does the name Between the Buried and Me originate?

Paul Waggoner: It came from a Counting Crows lyric.

UTV: Tell me a bit about the former bands that you guys were in.Tommy [Rogers, vox/keyboards] and I were in Prayer For Cleansing. We decided we wanted to go in a different direction musically, so we started writing material that would later become the first songs by Between the Buried and Me. Nick [Fletcher, guitar] and Jason [King, bass] were both in the North Carolina Metal/Hardcore band Azazel, though they each served their stints in that band at different times. And Mark [Castillo, drums] was in Bury Your Dead prior to joining Between the Buried and Me.

UTV: Your first album was on Lifeforce in Germany; how'd you end up on a German label, rather than a US label, for that release? And why Lifeforce rather than, say, Goodlife?

Paul Waggoner: To be honest, there wasn't really much interest from domestic labels. We were a new band, and I don't think many labels really wanted to take the risk of putting out our record. Lifeforce was really one of the only legitimate labels that had a genuine interest in our music. We never even talked to Goodlife, actually, but Lifeforce was definitely the right move for us.

UTV: How did you ultimately end up on Victory?

Paul Waggoner: Well, they ended up with a copy of the self-titled [album] and it kind of circulated around the Victory office. Everyone seemed to like it, so we went up there and talked to them. We really liked what they had to say and the diversity of their roster was really attractive to us; we thought that they would be the best label to catapult us to that next level, and they seemed to really respect and appreciate our music and our work ethic. So, soon after that, the deal was done. We couldn't be happier. Everything is going great so far.

UTV: You named your album *The Silent Circus*; could you please give some insight into that title?

Paul Waggoner: It's kind of a metaphor for the state of the world right now. Like, if you could look at the entire world from a distance without actually being interactive--through the eyes of someone with a completely outside perspective, and just observe the activity in the world--man's inhumanity towards man and the earth, shit like that. I think that by us living here and going through the motions of life on a day to day basis, we tend to ignore the course of destruction we are on; if we were able to somehow step back and look at what's going on, we would better understand how ridiculous some of the things we do are.

UTV: *The Silent Circus* seems likes it's getting rave reviews, and word is that it's selling really well, especially considering it's your first domestic release. As a band, are you pleased with some of your earlier decisions? What were some of the hard choices you've made, that in retrospect, worked out really well for you?

Paul Waggoner: I don't regret anything. We are so happy to be on Victory, and even in retrospect we don't think we could have picked a better label for our first release than Lifeforce. They really run an awesome label and we still have a great relationship. I don't think we've made any bad decisions. Everything we've done in the past has served as a building block to where we are now.

UTV: Your songs are extremely complex; what are your musical backgrounds that allow you to write such precise pieces?

Paul Waggoner: We just write what we feel. We all have a part in the writing process and we all have different backgrounds musically, so that's probably what gives the songs their complexity. I don't know, it's hard to explain. It just kind of happens. We actually try not to analyze our songwriting too much. We just let it take its course, and we don't question it. Unless it sucks-then we question it.

UTV: It seems that the band has almost two distinct sides-one, a raging Hardcore band, and the second, a more "sensitive," almost listener-friendly one guaranteed to make teenage girls swoon. Is it a musical tug-of-war between two styles-or maybe even two songwriters in the band-or is this just a by-product of what the band perceives as fragments of the overall dynamic?

Paul Waggoner: It's definitely part of the overall dynamic. We don't write parts with the intention of pleasing a certain type of listener. We just write parts that we think will fit the song and add some diversity to our sound.

UTV: Most of the lyrics are written in a first person style, is this a collective first person or does one member write all the lyrics?

Paul Waggoner: Tommy writes pretty much all they lyrics.

UTV: The track "Mordecai" is completely different musically than any other song on the album. How did this arise?

Paul Waggoner: I honestly don't know. We wrote it just like we wrote all the other songs. I don't know why it sounds so different. I guess it all goes back to what was inspiring us at the time. But, we definitely didn't write it with the intention of having it sound "different" from all our other songs.

UTV: With the different song structures and styles you use on the album, how do you go about selecting the track order? Is there a "theme," per se?

Paul Waggoner: We wrote the album in the exact order that it appears on the CD. We wanted it to kind of start off really brutal, and then kind of taper off to a softer, more relaxed atmosphere, and then just erupt with heaviness again.

UTV: Your album is produced by Matthew Ellard who also produced Converge's *Jane Doe*; do you find using the same producer leads to a somewhat predictable sound?

Paul Waggoner: No, not at all. I think we are a far different band than Converge. Matt did an awesome job of recognizing what type of band we were, and what type of sound we needed to accurately capture and portray our music.

UTV: With the current batch of Metalcore bands like As I Lay Dying and The Black Dahlia Murder getting such big exposure, do you see your style of music starting to come into the forefront of underground music? If you had to point to ONE band that paved the way for bands like yours, which would it be, and what did they do no one else did?

Paul Waggoner: Well, heavy music in general is big right now, and I think it's still on the upswing. I imagine bands like us will continue to have success in underground music for quite a while. As for what band paved the way for us, it'd be impossible to pinpoint just one band. Some bands have been playing their music for years and years and they have just now begun to be recognized. I don't think there was one band that just all the sudden broke through the wall and all the other bands followed them through.

UTV: What are the band's immediate plans for the future?

Paul Waggoner: Tour tour and tour. We haven't really thought much past that.

X

FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES

DARREN PALTROWITZ

With Long Island's music scene being pushed to the forefront by many in recent months, a handful of bands can be credited for spreading the good word of Nassau and Suffolk. The quintet that is From Autumn To Ashes-better known as FATA to their die-hards-possess a work ethic that should be respected by everyone involved in the music industry. Rather than waiting around for the bigwigs to come calling, they hit the road within their first year of formation and soon had more calls incoming than outcoming. ***The Fiction We Live***, their second full-length effort, was recently released on Vagrant Records as the band is currently traveling cross-country alongside the Alkaline Trio and Reggie & The Full Effect on the Vagrant Across America tour. Drummer/vocalist Fran Mark and guitarist Scott Gross answered some questions before a sick Scott dozed off... kinda.-**Paltrowitz**

Under the Volcano: Some people call you Hardcore, others Metal, others just "Emo;"for the record, state what you feel From Autumn To Ashes is.

Scott Gross: Classic Rock

Fran Mark: Fun.

UTV: Many other bands have more than one vocalist; one of whom more aggressive and scream-oriented than the other. Within the band's creative process, how is it worked out that Ben [Perri] and Fran's vocals will be split up?

Scott Gross: It works out like this: Fran picks out all the parts he wants to sing.

Fran Mark: We arm wrestle.

UTV: Is there a mantra or philosophy that the band lives by?

Scott Gross: When one is sick, go to bed early.

Fran Mark: Live and let live.

UTV: Is there a certain band or artist that your band models itself after? Or at least someone you find the work ethic of to be especially inspirational?

Scott Gross: Well I'll tell you, Ritchie Valens. He got on that plane and braved the storm

Fran Mark: Andy Tinsley.

UTV: With your sound being more complex and drawn-out on your second album, does that bring any cringing or embarrassment whenever you hear your first album?

Scott Gross: They are great songs, and I'm proud.

Fran Mark: I'm proud of our first album.

A MAJOR LABEL TO A YOUNG BAND'S CAREER IS LIKE A GARBAGE DISPOSAL TO THIS MORNING'S BREAKFAST.

UTV: Is there anything that specifically triggered *The Fiction We Live* to be more aggressive and varied than *Too Bad You're Beautiful*? To my knowledge there weren't any van accidents, legal problems, hiatuses or band members departing between albums?

Scott Gross: Something has changed; with the writing of the record, the wrongness came out.

Fran Mark: The government takes a third of your check.

UTV: Thus far, how has your life changed as being part of the Vagrant Records roster?

Scott Gross: No, not in the least.

Fran Mark: We get Timmy to hang out with.

UTV: Had you never signed to Vagrant, where do you think you would be at this exact second?

Scott Gross: Island Def Jam.

Fran Mark: Unemployed...unless I get a job at Sanctuary music group.

UTV: From Autumn To Ashes nearly signed to Island Records, but pulled out at the last minute. Why? Can you contrast the Vagrant and Island offers?

Scott Gross: We feel Vagrant could pay more attention to our needs.

Fran Mark: A major label to a young band's career is like a garbage disposal to this morning's breakfast.

UTV: Were there other major labels courting you guys? Did you find this process more strenuous or more annoying? Any exciting stories, or anyone in particular you thought was a turd?

Fran Mark: Melanie Wills, A&R for Jive is a turd. She promised us a fancy dinner and brought us to McDonald's for cheeseburgers--and I don't even eat meat!

UTV: Is there anything you miss from your days of being signed to Ferret Music?

Fran Mark: Carl [Severson] would pack me a month's worth of brown bag lunch just before I leave for tour. I miss that a lot.

Scott Gross: I miss being label mates of Every Time I Die.

UTV: When a local becomes successful, many of its initial followers will often turn into elitists and talk of a band "selling out." In the case of FATA, how is something like this handled?

Fran Mark: We have a dynamic duo of a management team, Cory and Irene, they handle everything. I can't even tie my shoes without their help.

[Fran, predicting Scott's answer]: Just say "blow me."

UTV: What exactly is "success" to a band that is rooted in DIY ideals?

[Fran answering for Scott]: I don't know, ask a DIY band.

Fran Mark: Being able to pay my bills so the collection agency doesn't bang down my door.

UTV: FATA took an untraditional approach of spending more time off Long Island than on during its formative years. Is this an approach that you would recommend to more bands? Why or why not?

Fran Mark: Tour until you have played every city in the world. Once you have done that, go play all of those cities again.

UTV: From touring and traveling so much, how does that a music scene like Long Island's compare throughout the country? Do you buy into the idea that the Island has more than competition than camaraderie amongst bands and promoters than elsewhere?

Fran Mark: I don't think there is too much competition on LI, all of the biggest LI bands are good friends of ours. I think, if anything, we help each other out, like this :listen to Brand New, Glassjaw and Taking Back Sunday. They all rock.

Scott Gross: I'm going to sleep...

UTV: While on the topic of local bands, you guys have included Melanie Wills of One True Thing, formerly of Scarab, in and out of the studio. How did Melanie first come into the picture?

Fran Mark: She use to be an A&R rep for Jive. She brought us to McDonald's, then they fired her and she started One True Thing.

UTV: Do you think we will ever see One True Thing touring with FATA so Melanie will be able to collaborate with the band live for fans elsewhere in the country to see?

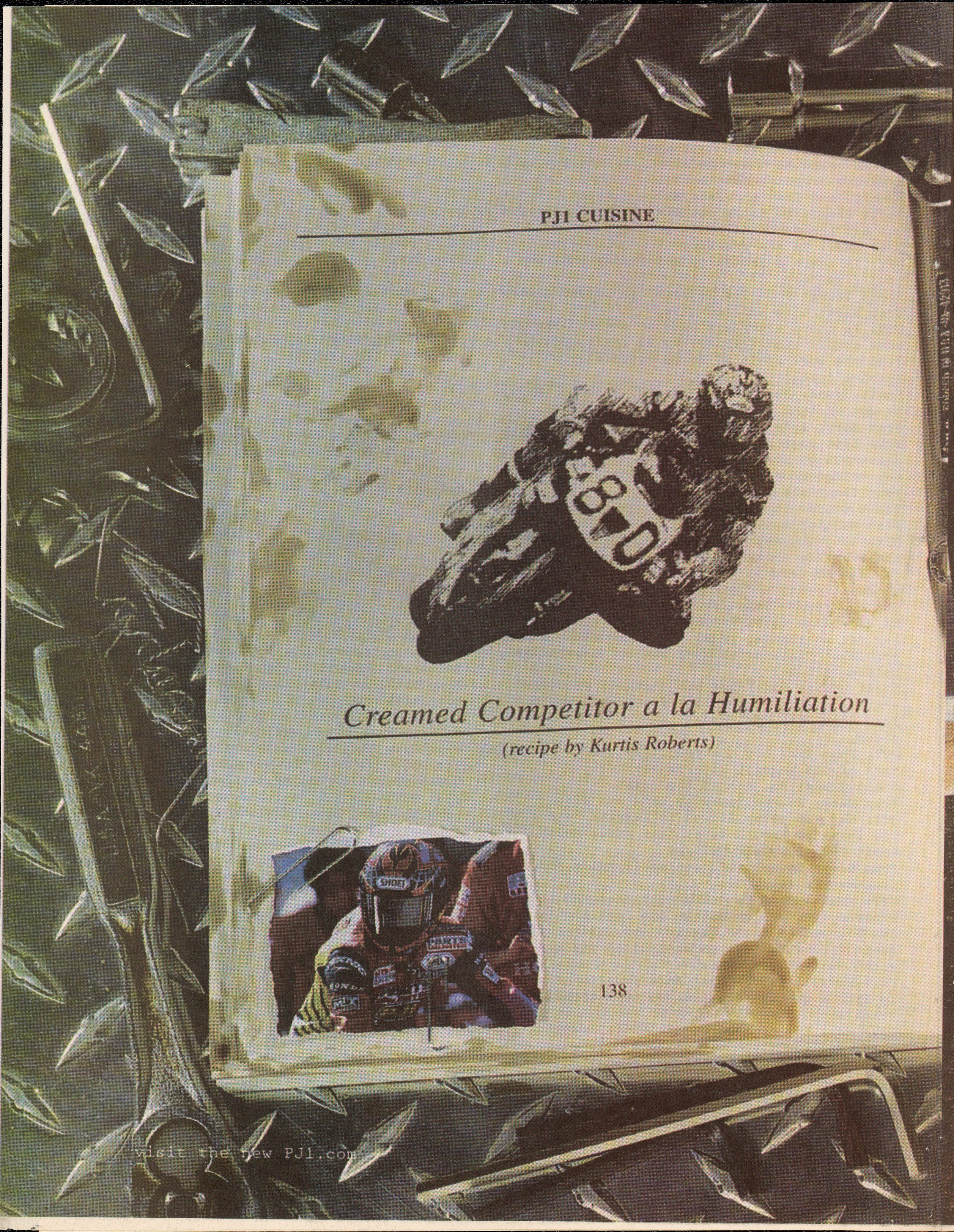
Fran Mark: She bakes a mean carrot cake, but she won't be touring with us..

UTV: And finally, any last words for the kids?

Fran Mark: The kids? I am a kid. My eyes hurt; I need to get them fixed but, it's expensive. When I turn 25 I'm going to buy new ones. Maybe I'll upgrade to a better color.

Scott Gross: ...zzzzzzzzzz...

X



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(recipe by Kurtis Roberts)

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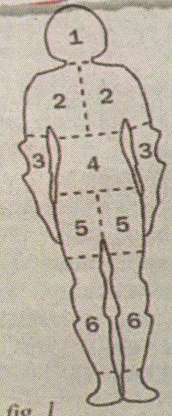

fig. 1
Butchering chicken

Tummy Troubles: *Your killer lap times may cause other riders gastric distress. This, however, shouldn't pose a problem as you'll be way in front of them anyway.*

139

PJ1

Ingredients for Victory.

Applying a singular vision and super-human work ethic, Punk Core Records label owner Dave Amcher helped put safety pin and mohawk-wearing punk bands like The Casualties on the map; Amcher now hopes to do the same with Hardcore bands on New Day Rising, his brand new label imprint. Dave was good enough to answer my questions about his latest venture.-Black

new day rising

rich black

Under the Volcano: You've been running Punk Core--a label synonymous with spiky-haired punk bands--for about six years now. Where did the interest in Hardcore suddenly come from?

Dave Amcher: We've always been interested in Hardcore and some other music genres, but of course we've been hesitant to release anything on the Punk Core label that was outside of the genre that we're known for. There are a bunch of us who work here and we have diverse musical interests, including, but not limited to, Hardcore and Punk.

UTV: Why did you decide to start an entirely different label from Punk Core? I mean, Punk Core has CORE in the name, no?

Dave Amcher: We've been looking to diversify for a while without diluting the genre-specific quality of Punk Core. We thought long and hard about how to go about it, and finally decided early in 2003 that we would start a new imprint label. We put together a game plan, did our research and decided to give it a go. Hardcore is the main focus with New Day Rising, but we don't intend to make it quite as genre-specific as Punk Core. NDR is basically open to anything that we like that would not fit on the Punk Core roster.

UTV: Is there a specific mission for New Day Rising? If so, what is it?

Dave Amcher: Well, similarly to Punk Core, our goal is to release records by bands that we consider to be the best in the genre. The main focus will be Hardcore and other sub-genres that have evolved from it. New Day Rising will have the same attention to detail and quality that Punk Core releases have and though it may take some time we intend to leave our mark in the Hardcore world before we're done!

UTV: What are some of the lessons you've learned from Punk Core that you feel you can apply to New Day Rising? Is there anything you're doing VERY differently from the way you run Punk Core? Is Mordam distributing NDR as well?

Dave Amcher: We've learned many lessons through trial and error by running Punk Core over the years. I believe that the fundamentals of running a label remain the same regardless of the genre. Of course there are genre-specific media where we may advertise/promote/sell NDR releases that we wouldn't for Punk Core releases and vice versa, but the underlying procedures are still the same. Basically, we offer releases with the best recording, packaging and musical quality that we can find and we promote the hell out of them. That goes for both labels, regardless of the band or the genre. We work extremely hard to be the best, and for that Punk Core has become very popular. We intend to achieve the same level of success with NDR .

UTV: How do you propose to get where you wanna go? Do you have any specific plans?

Dave Amcher: Before we decided to start the new imprint label we came up with a game plan. After doing our research and coming up with a name, a logo and a plan, we decided to submit the new label to Mordam. We decided that if it was accepted we would take that as a karmic green light to go ahead with our plans. We submitted the proposal, and they accepted the new label based on the positive experience that they've had working with Punk Core for the last two years. As far as I know, that's the first time that Mordam--or any distributor for that matter--has accepted a label that technically didn't yet exist. That was a great boost for us and for the new label.

UTV: Right now, who are the bands on New Day Rising? What do you feel makes them special?

Dave Amcher: As of right now we've signed three bands, all three of them top-notch Hardcore bands. The first was the Backup Plan from Long Island, whose album was released in October. They've got a super-tight and unique melodic sound with hooks all over the place. The second is Where Eagles Dare from Phoenix. When we first read about and then heard their CD EP on the Endwell label we were blown away. They've got a harder, more traditional Hardcore sound. Then there's Heads Vs. Breakers, also amongst the very best that Long Island has to offer. They have more of a melodic sound with kind of a Lifetime-ish feel to it, but still totally unique. Heads Vs. Breakers features ex-members of LIHC heroes Silent Majority, a sound that is still very much present in their music.

Of course it makes sense that we're drawing some of our talent from Long Island because it has some of the best, most talented Hardcore bands in the world. And when you want oranges, you go to Florida.

UTV: Are you taking demos right now? What kind of bands are you looking for?

Dave Amcher: Absolutely. We're really open to a lot of different things right now genre-wise. Even If it's something that doesn't fit into the Hardcore mold, as long as the music is top-notch and the band knows how to promote themselves, our ears are open. The main thing that we look for-with both labels-are bands that know how to promote themselves and to create a buzz for themselves. Touring is also all-important. We look for bands who are ready, willing and able to hit the road with a vengeance,. Touring is not only a great promotional tool but it's kind of like Punk Rock bootcamp. We know that if a band can go out there, take their lumps and come home wanting to do it again, that's a band who's got the guts to stick it out and become successful. It isn't easy, and not everyone can hack it.

UTV: Is New Day Rising a "Long Island" label? Why or why not?

Dave Amcher: Well, we are based on Long Island but we don't intend to exclusively sign Long Island bands if that's what you mean. Unfortunately, more often than not, a typical "Long Island" label or band is one that doesn't recognize the fact that there is anywhere else to play or to sell their records besides on Long Island. I think that's a waste of time, and to the that end I would say no, neither Punk Core or NDR could be classified as "Long Island" labels.

UTV: I know you had the opportunity to sign some better-known bands from the area, but decided not to--what happened?

Dave Amcher: Of course having a bigger name band on the new label would be a good boost especially early on while we're trying to establish the NDR name. However, like I said, there are certain criteria that we look for in a band and we don't care how big the band is, if they don't meet that criteria then we're not interested in working with them. We have no time or room on the label for big egos; we need bands that are willing to work as hard as we do to make them a popular, successful band. We're willing to do things the long, hard way-the right way. We've done it before, and we'll do it again.

UTV: Now that Long Island bands are getting played on commercial radio and selling in the hundreds of thousands of records, convince me you're just not trying to cash in on LI-mania.

Dave Amcher: Well it's true that some of the bands we've signed on NDR so far are from Long Island, but as I mentioned before it's not our main focus. It's also true that some of the best Hardcore bands in the world are from Long Island, and that's not a new thing. Long Island/New York City/metro New York has been known worldwide for it's unique style of Hardcore since the beginning. The styles now are different than what they were 20 years ago, but still just as distinct. Of course it makes sense that we're drawing some of our talent from Long Island because it has some of the best, most talented Hardcore bands in the world. And when you want oranges, you go to Florida.

UTV: In closing, what are your goals for New Day Rising a year from now?

Dave Amcher: We're hoping within the next year to have a solid roster of approximately seven to ten top-notch bands. Another one of our biggest goals at the moment is to secure a booking agent for each of our bands. It's one of the hardest but most necessary things to do. I think a lot of labels overlook it and/or don't want to assume the responsibility. Beyond that, we're hoping to have New Day Rising well-established within the next year and to continue to grow! Bands, send your demos. Booking agents get in touch! Everyone check out our web site at www.newdayrising.org

X

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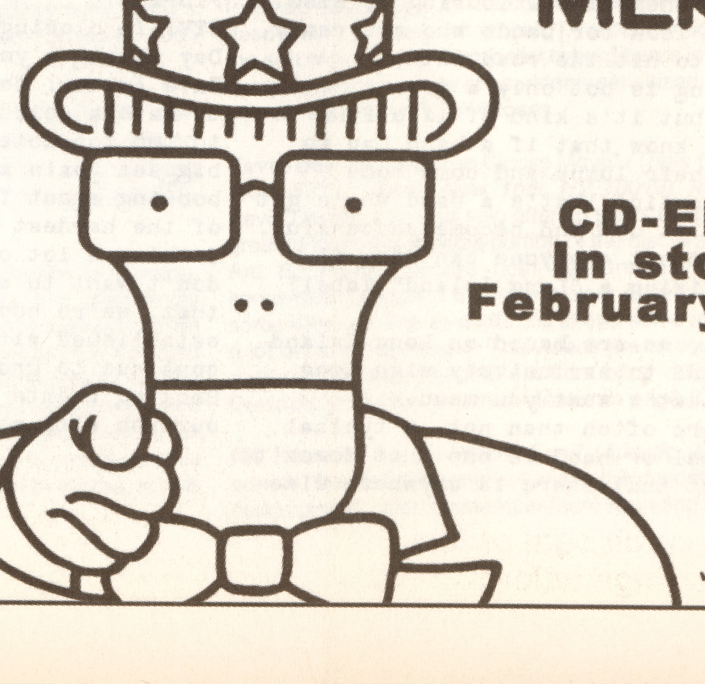

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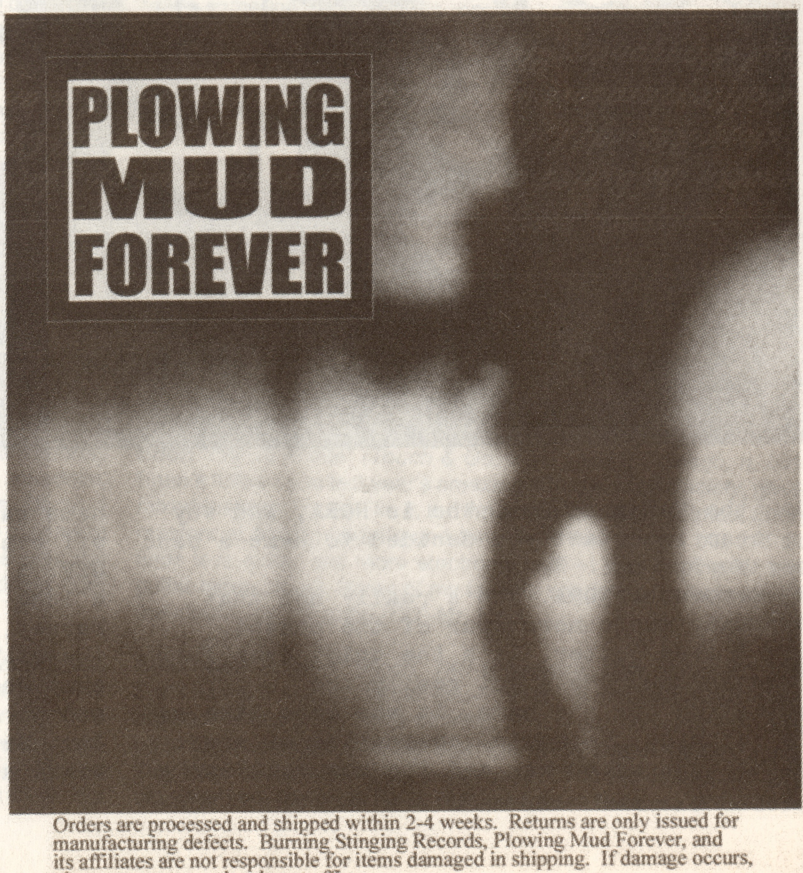

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NORA

RICH BLACK

*Speaking to him briefly, you'd think Carl Severson too "nice" to be the visionary behind New Jersey's noisy Ferret Records, let alone the roaring frontman for NORA, but they're all one and the same. Just as remarkable is NORA's latest full-length, **Dreamers and Deadmen** [Trustkill], a headlong plunge into dark emotional waters that is ultimately Hardcore baptism. **Dreamers and Deadmen** is a deafening testament for those who still dare to dream... -**Black***

Under the Volcano: So...who is NORA, and why is she so important you decided to name a band after her?
Carl Severson: NORA, she's really not that important, she's more spur of the moment, which I like better. It's the chick from *Pump Up the Volume*. She's not really the inspiration for the name, it was more like we were watching the movie, commenting on how cool her character was and the how cool her name was... and that little light bulb went off over our heads.
UTV: I know that you worked at Roadrunner for a long time; how did you balance running Ferret, playing in NORA, and working full-time there? Was there one thing in particularly that enabled you to give up the Roadrunner gig and pursue your own full-time career?
Carl Severson: Portland [guitar], who now works at Ferret full-time also balanced his

full time job and NORA while working for Ferret. Really, we just did as much as we could at night, on breaks, etc. I left Roadrunner when it became obvious that something had to give. I was asking my bands to work full-time-touring, writing, recording, etc-yet I wasn't giving Ferret 100% of my time. I also figured if I was ever going to take a risk on myself it needed to be while I was single, had no kids, no one depended on me you know? Really, if I fail I only fuck up my life at this point... well, and my employees... and my bands... [nervous laugh].... kinda scary.

UTV: Again, considering you worked at Roadrunner, was Roadrunner ever interested in having NORA on the label?

Carl Severson: Oh no. I got to Roadrunner at a time when they were looking for more Nickelback type stuff, and honestly, NORA is abrasive and I can't sing to save my life. They were supportive though, the staff at Roadrunner, on up to even the owner, were always super cool to me. Ferret was almost a pet project to a few people there and as the label got bigger and I was selling records they became interested in it.

UTV: If you had to draw some type of musical lineage for NORA, what band, specifically for you, might have been the jump-off point from traditional "Hardcore"? Is it Kiss It Goodbye, Converge, or maybe something much earlier?

Carl Severson: Close. Deadguy, that *Fixation On A Co-Worker* album just blew my mind, and well, Converge is a favorite of everyone in NORA. but our influences range all over, definitely a lot of noisy stuff, but also a lot of Metal and old Punk.

UTV: Dude, after you play a live set, what the fuck does your voice sound like? Do you have to suck on ice for hours afterward, or what? Do your friends make "Carl's got a frog in his throat" jokes?

Carl Severson: Mike from Endeavor, NORA and now Burnt By the Sun taught me how to use my voice so I don't throw it out. I can do 10 shows in a row and I'll be fine. What bothers me is if I'm stupid enough to go out in the cold right after we play or if the club is really loud and I try to talk to people all night. It's funny, just talking when it's really loud, you throw your voice in a weird way and it fucks your throat up.

Dude, when we were kids and Mike sang for Endeavor they were three shows into their first tour and his voice was already going. So I got this brilliant idea to get him that throat spray stuff that numbs your throat when you have strep. WORST IDEA EVER. it seemed to work, but really what it did was make so he didn't notice we was utterly destroying his voice.

UTV: In general, despite how they may appear or SOUND to the outside world, many bands in today's Hardcore scene seem to be more literate than was perceived in the past; Hardcore bands have also become more sophisticated musically-maybe even spiritually?--and more aware of their presentation through packaging, etc. Would you agree that Hardcore bands have gotten "smarter"? If so, why do you think this is?

Carl Severson: Smarter... hmm... they've gotten more involved in the music industry, more involved in the other aspects of releasing music-ie packaging, websites, contracts etc. Are they smarter? Are we? I dunno. I think the internet has made them more aware. Like, way too many kids know what Soundscan means now, where as before unless you were working for a label you never knew. Kids on messageboards talk about contracts and what not. That sort of information is much more public. The big boys have also had a huge effect. As this type of music has gotten more commercial. You've got guys that manage bands on majors coming and talking to underground bands, you've got A&R guys, you've got lawyers and you've got publishers. They're all dipping into our well, which makes sense; look at how many records some of the indies have been selling. Victory sold like a quarter million of a few different releases, that's nuts... that company can sell records as good as any major. Shit, look at Drive Thru and Vagrant, before selling pieces off to the majors they were massive indies, which rules. It makes sense that the majors follow suit and come here, where the little guy are doing way better than they have been -contextually. An 18 year old kid that has no interest in working at Blockbuster can learn a lot if he pays enough attention.

UTV: By the way, what the hell is going on in Jersey these days? You've got a shitload goin' on there, from Punk to Hardcore to Screamo stuff...

Carl Severson: Yeah, it's a sweet little state. There are a lot of great bands coming out of here and probably a lot more you haven't heard of yet: My Shining One, The Banner, a bunch of other stuff.

UTV: Would you think that I was a douchebag if I told you I was listening to Classical music right now?

Carl Severson: Nope. I don't listen to it, but I listen to a bunch of lame shit. It's all good.

UTV: Just kidding...there are many other reasons to think I'm a douchebag, but listening to Classical isn't one of them. But seriously, your lyrics deal with some pretty "big" concepts, like mortality, personal empowerment and applying the merit of Willie Wonka's philosophy to the Hardcore scene. Have your years in NORA helped mold coping

mechanisms, or bring certain aspects of your life into sharper focus? You seem to be re-evaluating your life right now; are you? What are some of the things that might have forced this re-evaluation? What have you learned traveling the path you've been on? And, now that I've asked you such a long-winded question, I'm especially interested in hearing short, sweet truths.
Carl Severson: Wow, that's a big question. I've been in NORA for six or seven years now. I've been all around the US, Europe, Canada and we've still got more to do. I couldn't help but learn a million things from it, let alone just spending this much time with the other guys in the band, who are all very different people. But yeah, one thing I've figured out recently is that I might not have turned into the person I wanted to be when I grew up, and since I'm getting up there-that is towards being grown up-that I should start trying to be that person, if, in fact, that's who I want to be. I dunno, does that make sense? More or less, I'm just trying to do the best I can. That's all anyone can really ask of themselves.
UTV: I think it's obvious from the record that the "dreamers" are artists; could you please elaborate a bit more on who you consider the "deadmen"? On "Quitters" for instance, you draw attention to the belief that living "unconsciously" isn't really living; are the "deadmen" those that have resigned themselves to the everyday grind, or is there a deeper meaning for you?
Carl Severson: You know it's not just artists, it's Hardcore kids, it's anyone that believes and strives to be better, fix things, idealists, artists, activists..etc. To a certain degree "Deadmen" is the eventual result of being a Dreamer-or at least I might think that way on my more depressing days. How do you keep from ever getting to that point?
UTV: In closing, this is very troubling: My sister is exposing my seven-year-old nephew to bands like the Backstreet Boys...could you recommend something with a little more UMPH! that won't give the kid nightmares? He's still watching *Sponge Bob*, so I don't know if he's quite ready to for NORA, SOMETHING needs to be done. Suggestions?
Carl Severson: [laughs] Dude, I have no idea. I don't think anything NORA or Ferret has released is suitable for kids still down with *Sponge Bob*. Give 'em a couple years.
X

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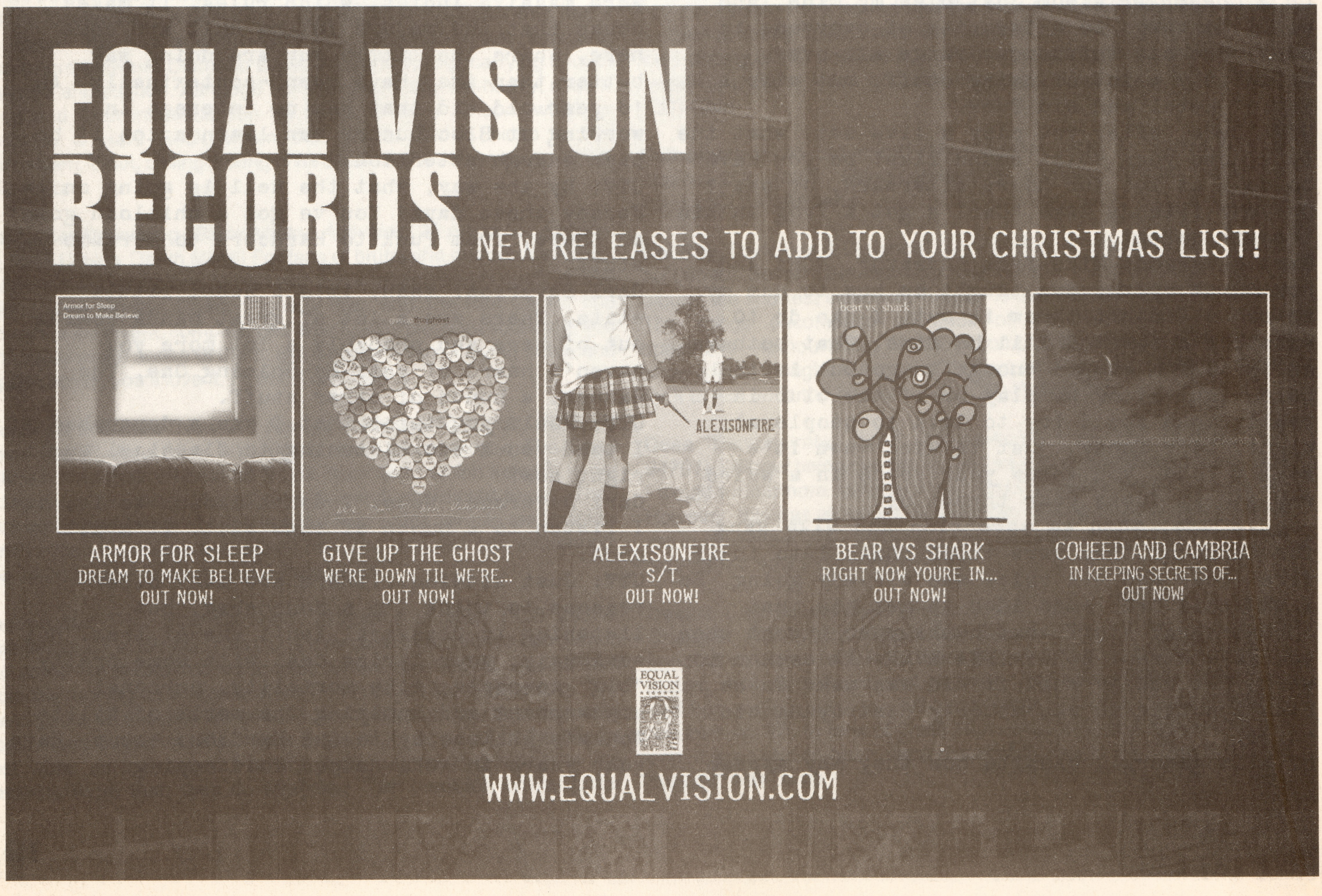
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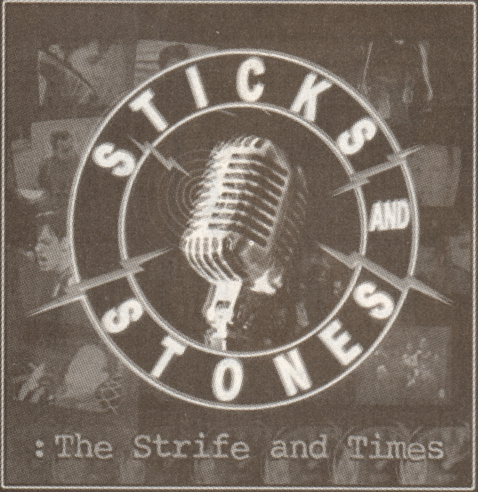
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*Scraps and Heart Attacks is proof that pure breed Long Island Hardcore is alive and well. The band's full-length debut, **Stay Sick** [Triple Crown] is a fast n' furious search and destroy mission that leaves no room for excuses or prisoners. On record, vocalist Travis Reilly comes off like a really angry guy, but he was still nice enough to answer my questions—he even suggests a way your sister could really help the band out!-**Black***

SCRAPS AND

HEART ATTACKS

RICH BLACK

Under the Volcano: You guys used to be called The Heist, why the name change?

Travis Reilly: We thought it would be a good idea to keep it fresh, we are thinking about changing our name again in a month or two, that way no one can keep track of what we are doing

UTV: When people ask you why you "signed to that Emo label, Triple Crown," what do you tell them? Please respond like I'm a 15 year old know-it-all. I can take it.

Travis Reilly: Listen kid, we need some exposure, so until your sister starts sucking our dicks, we thought Triple Crown would be a good idea.

UTV: You guys are friends with The Back Up Plan, who are on New Day Rising, Punk Core's hardcore label imprint. Were you guys talking to New Day at some point as well?

Travis Reilly: No, we never talked with NDR but The Backup Plan is the best band on Long Island right now, honestly.

UTV: For some reason, I thought you guys were a sXe band, but your bio says you wanna drink my beer. Did sXe ever figure into the band, early on, or am I just smoking too much pot?

Travis Reilly: You probably smoke a lot of pot, but early on the band was three-fifths sXe but we never had songs about it or anything. But now, I am the only one left that is straight edge.

UTV: *Still Sick* is a raw Hardcore record, at a time when many of the Long Island bands that are getting "noticed" tend to play more melodic stuff; do you think this might work for you, or against you? How so? Do you even care what "works" for you?

Travis Reilly: Nah I don't really care. We are playing a style of music that we like, we aren't playing something that we know kids will like just for the sake of giving people stuff they want to hear.

UTV: I think the general idea outside of LI is that the Island is a cushy, easy place to live, yet *Still Sick* seethes with anger. What do we have to be angry about on LI? What are YOU angry about, in particular?

Travis Reilly: Traffic.

UTV: Mike from Hot Rod Circuit seemed like a strange choice as producer for *Still Sick*; how did you end up working with him? While he was recording you, was he so swept up in the vibe at any point that he started breaking things?

Travis Reilly: [laughs] We were going to originally record the record with Brian McTernen at Salad Days, but something came up and he couldn't do it when we needed to record, so we got hooked up with Mike, and I think he did a great job even though he's a harsh bud. He may or may not have broken a chair on one of the mosh parts when he was mixing.

UTV: I've heard that Frank [Del Monte, guitar] recently left the band, what happened? And how might this affect the way songs are written in the future?

Travis Reilly: Yeah, Frank just played his last show with us on Friday. He couldn't stay in the band for two reasons, one being that he is getting married soon and doesn't have enough time to put into Scraps and Heart Attacks, being that he was in two bands. Secondly, his other band was taking up too much of his time. Check them out though, they are called Slow Ride, Take It Easy. They do all Foghat covers.

UTV: You've done a lot of East Coast shows with bands like The Movielife...are you going across country this time in support of *Still Sick*?

Travis Reilly: We did do a few shows with The Movielife. As of now we are playing a bunch of weekends and hopefully we will be doing a US tour within the next few months. We'll see what happens

UTV: Did Fred from Triple Crown show you the Endangered Feces video yet? I hear the drummer from that band drinks pee...

Travis Reilly: That's cool. Our old drummer used to drink his girlfriend's breast milk--what's worse? You be the judge. Viva la spiro!

X

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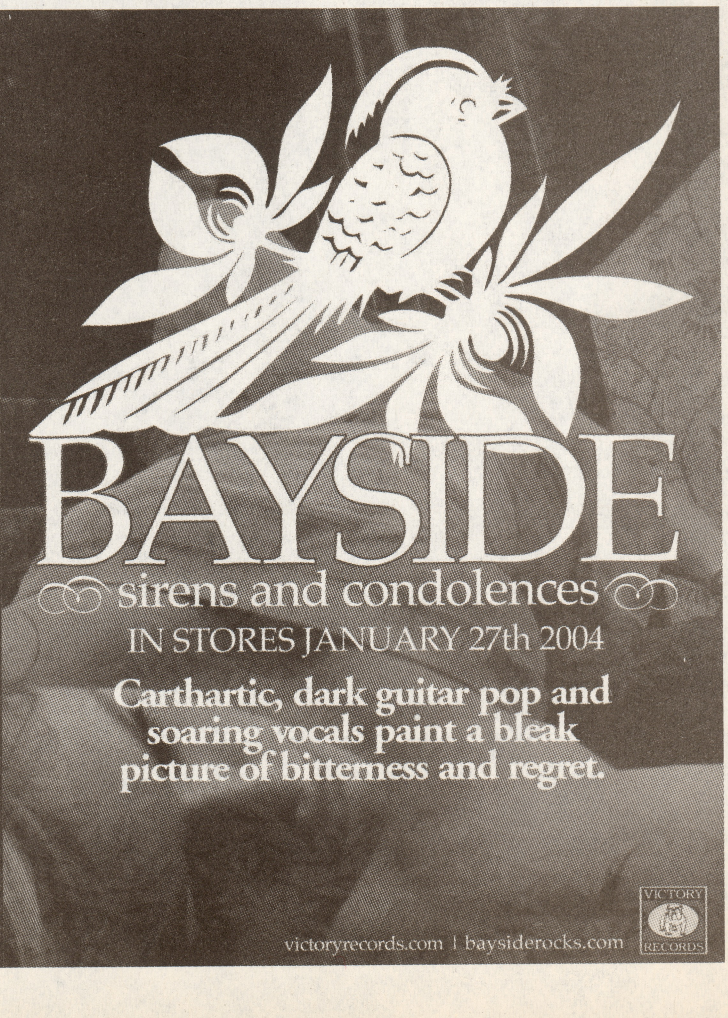

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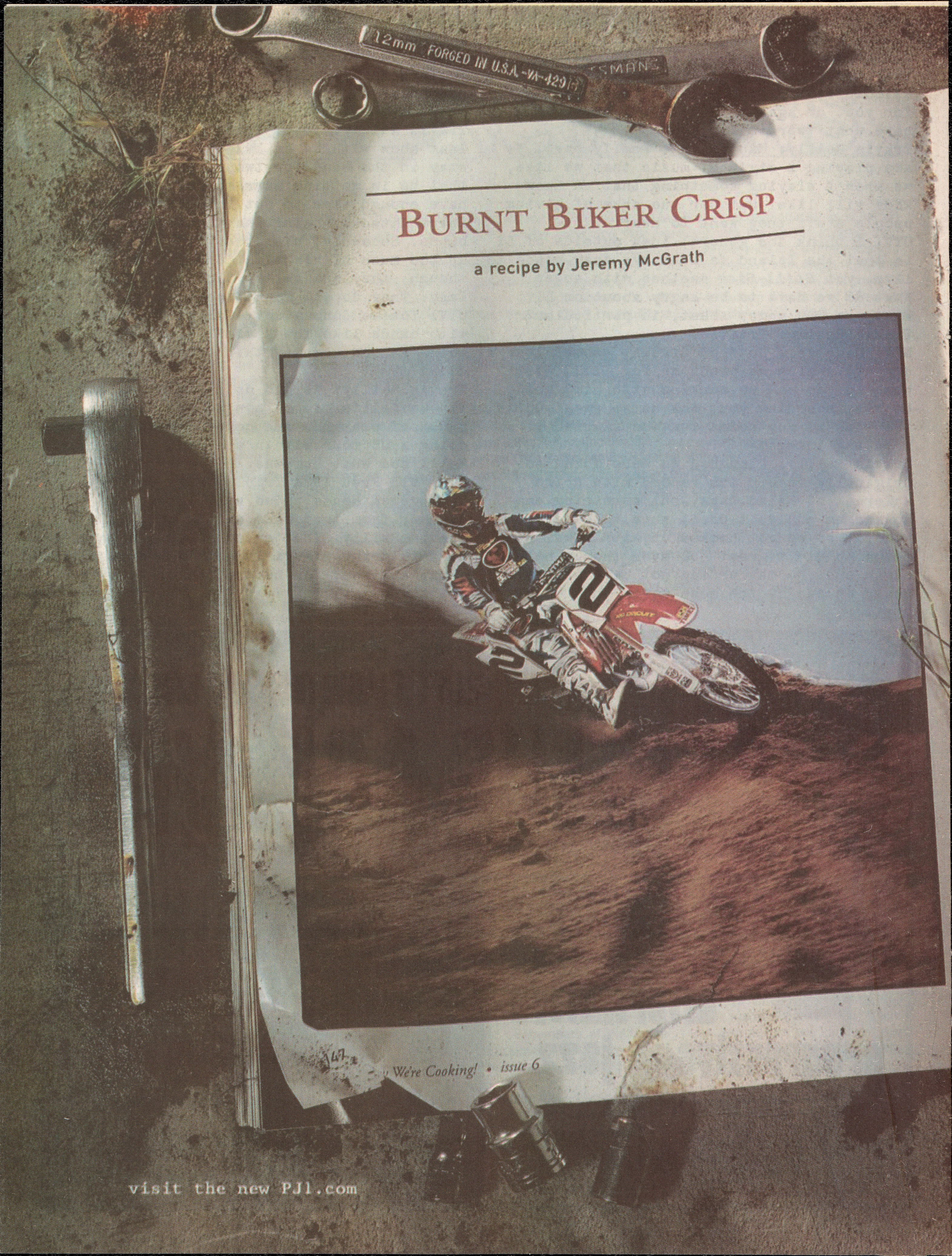

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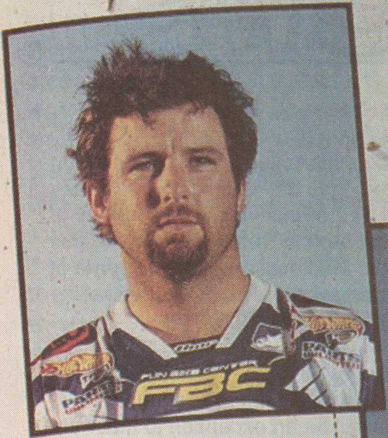

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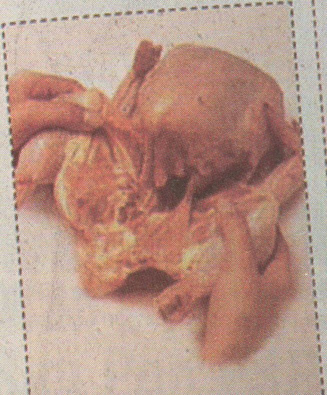
fig. 1: Removing guts

DIRECTIONS Place 1 motorcycle right side up on track. Cover liberally with PJ1 Oil, Fork Tuner Fork Oil, Octane Plus and Foam Filter Treatment. Next, fill competitors' body cavities with dread as you rub salt into open wounds with fresh aerial maneuvers. Finally, peel away from other riders completely, vanquishing any false hopes of success. Trophy is ready when riders' guts are removed, leaving shells of former selves.

Related dishes: Cream Puffs (see page 37)

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Audio Reviews

30 Years War "Under the Gun" *(Substandard, POB 310, Berkeley, CA 94701).* I'm not a Hardcore kinda guy, sorry, but the lyrics are at least calling for a just society.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

40 Below Summer "The Mourning After" *(Razor & Tie, 214 Sullivan St. Suite 4A, New York, NY10012).* I would rather drink a Slurpee filled with Roseanne Barrs' diarrhea than listen to this album.(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

93 Million Miles *(Simba, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615).* Dennis Lyxzen from Refused and the(International) Noise Conspiracy most likely didn't want this released—it's a five-song EP of self-recorded songs by his old band, 93 Million Miles. The lyrics were, surprisingly, along the lines of what you get now, but the music lacks the excitement that would be heard from him within the next few years.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

A Life Once Lost "A Great Artist" *(Deathwish Inc., 10 Lothrop St., Beverly, MA 01915).* These fairly middling Metalcore stylings, while technically sophisticated, lack the sort of visceral drive necessary to captivate. A stagnant growl and chug formula proves the culmination of this nine song escapade, and despite a fair array of blaring harsh showmanship, very little memorable ripping is accomplished here.(CD)**-Ramek**

A Perfect Murder "Cease to Suffer" *(Goodfellow, 22 Wilson St., Hamilton, ON L8R 1C5, Canada).* These guys are a mix of Hatebreed and Pantera with a bit of '80's Metal guitar thrown in. Even the vocals sound like a mix of Phil Anselmo and Jamey Jasta. The guitars, all three of them, tend to track out with Metalcore style chord progressions, but then in the middle of a song you get random Maiden, Priest and Dio-esque guitar riffs. They really remind me of something that you would have found on Back Ta Basics records a few years ago. Similar to As I Lay Dying, Black Dahlia Murder, and Darkest Hour.(CD)**-Myk**

Act of Rites "What Tears Us Apart" (*www.actofrites.com*). Generic NYHC with a singer similar to Raybeez. That is all.**(CD)-McClernon**

Alexisonfire "Alexisonfire" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson NY 12534).* A cookie-cutter—by current standards—Emo/Hardcore/Punk Rock mixture that is unappealing to me aside from witty song titles. Points off for misspelling John Cusack's name within the booklet, but points recouped for the enhanced CD features.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

All the Dead Pilots "Steady Not Static" (*Ambiguous City, POB 31560, Baltimore, MD 21207*). Taking cues from bands like Jawbox, All the Dead Pilots provide jagged, dissonant guitar riffs and emotion-filled choruses that are bolstered by fierce, driving vocals. All signs indicate that these guys probably put on an entertaining live show, judging from the genuine energy displayed on *Steady Not Static*. Fans of Burning Airlines and early Shudder To Think should take note.(CD)**-Andriani**

Aluminum Babe *(Mother West, 132 W. 28th St., New York, NY 10001).* A five song EP of somewhat annoying poppy punk songs, but props go out to the third song, which is in French. Also note ex-members of Leeway are on this.(CD)**-Mr. Noiz**

Amorphis "The Karelian Isthmus" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd., Upper Darby, PA 19082).* This is a re-issue of the band's classic full-length that has had the *Privilege of Evil* EP added as bonus tracks. The disc boasts 17 tracks, compromising some of the best gothic Doom Metal ever recorded. For those not familiar, Amorphis started as a full on Death metal band and then ventured into the Gothic stylings they display today. The liner notes contain all the lyrics and a brief history of the *Privilege…* EP. For anyone into the Gothic-Death Metal style, this is a mandatory release; it's got fantastic Medieval artwork and some of the most original songs you will hear anywhere. For fans of Paradise Lost, Samael, Dark Tranquility and Dimm Borgir.(CD)**-Myk**

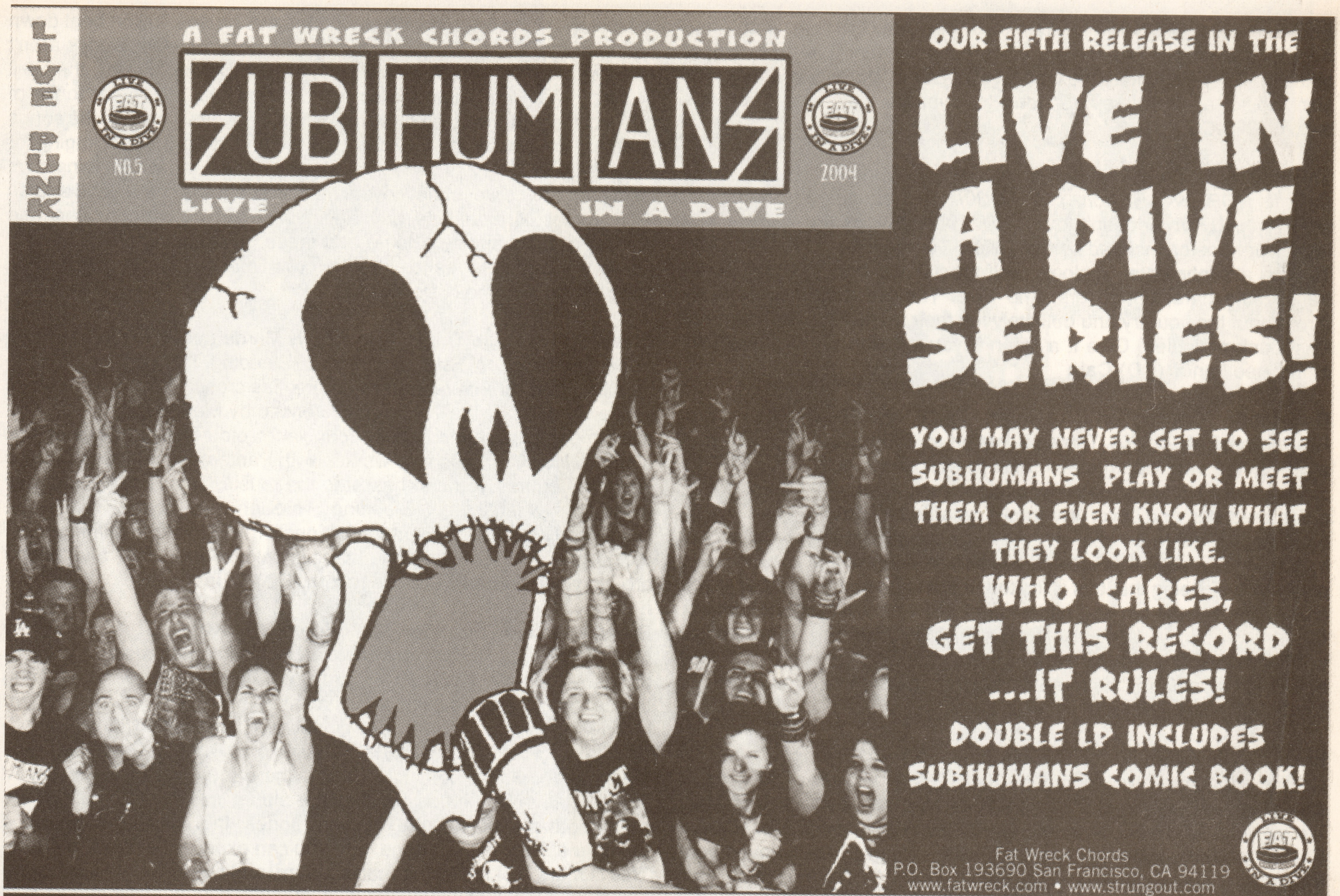
Anadivine *(Sidecho, 1215 N. Redgum St. Suite L, Anaheim, CA 92806).* I'm not a big fan of current Emo bands. I tend to find them to be too sappy and unlistenable. Anadivine will be an exception to that rule. While they do have elements of Screamo and current Hardcore bands intertwined in the album, they are closer to Coheed than they are to Poison The Well. Sean's vocals are really convincing. Unlike many bands that just sound like they are whining, you actually feel for these songs. The songs remind me a lot of the first time I heard Lifetime and was floored that someone could sing to these riffs and pounding beats. This is the band's second release, and it contains eight tracks. I can truly recommend this to those who are either big fans of the scene looking for a good band, or for someone who has never heard this style. This is a diamond in the rough.(CD)**-Myk**

Anti-Anti "Hooray For Everything" *(Fast Music, POB 206512, New Haven, CT 06520).* This band has the worst singer I may have ever heard play classic style Punk stuff that is similar to the Queers, Screeching Weasel or the Ramones. The music is okay, at times reminding me a bit more of Down By Law than the previous list of bands in black leather and jeans, but the singer is just dreadful. He voice is higher than your average punk guy and in the process of trying to "expand his vocals" comes out with horrendous tones that are like nails on a chalk board to me. This is like the house punk band at a bad backroad redneck bar.(CD)**-Myk**

Antimatter "Lights Out" *(End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101).* I like Anathema. I also liked the first Antimatter (ex-Anathema members) album. I love Pink Floyd, and I even like where bands like Paradise Lost have gone the last couple of years. That said, and the fact that I am extremely experimental in my listening habits as far as what I will try, this album is dull. It's like the long drawn out parts from *Dark Side of the Moon*, except without the pay off. This album is really ethereal and borders on Space Rock. While there isn't a bad part on the album, there really aren't any highlights either. I really want to like this, but I find myself zoning out every time I put it on. It just isn't enough to hold my attention.(CD)**-Myk**

Backstabbers Incorporated "Bare As Bones" *(Black Market Activities, 23 Rand St., Revere , MA 02151).* Another noisy Grindcore band; I just can't get enough of it. Twenty-five action-packed Thrash songs that make me want to fucking murder someone as the CD progresses. This album is a collection from their previous vinyl splits, demos and compilations. Backstabbers Inc. features members of The Red Chord and ex-members of Piecemeal. I can just picture the simultaneous floorpunches during the breakdowns in each song. It's repetitive and predictable, but what isn't?(CD)**-Cain**

Beautiful New *(Capsule, POB 1861, Belleville, MI 48112).* This EP by Beautiful New contains four diverse tracks. By diverse, I mean each track sounds nothing like the next. They fit under the Post Hardcore/Indie category and are compared to Rites of Spring and



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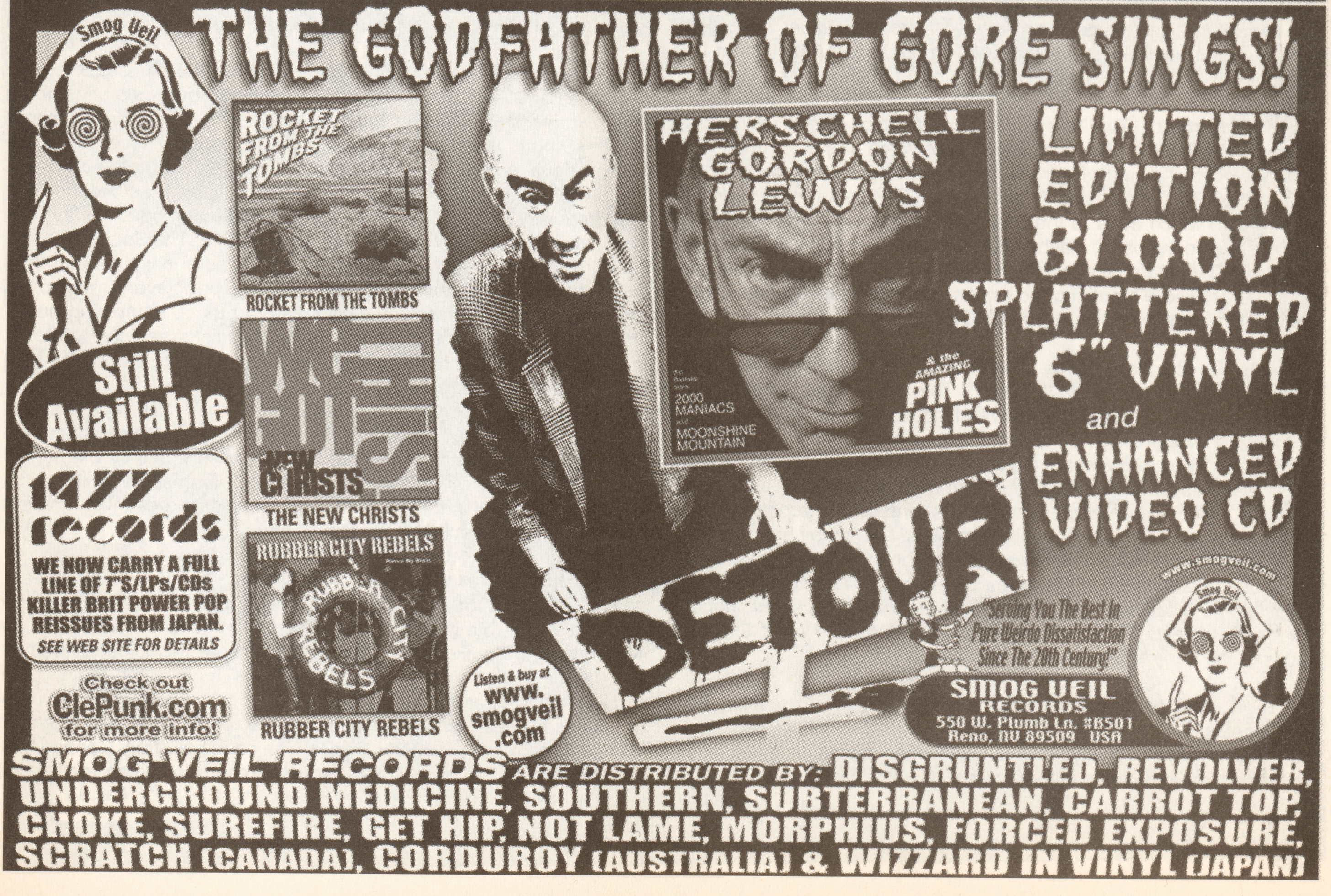

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Embrace. Beautiful New features Lee Openshaw of Hinge and Vince Averill of Mandown. Now that the two have collaborated, this EP has taken their songwriting to the next level of power and melody. They are also doing a complete US tour to support the release of this record.(CD)-**Cain**

The Beatings “The Heart, the Product, the Machine, and the Asshole” *(Midriff, POB 294, Boston, MA 02130).* This sounds like reflective, sullen music. Who doesn’t love that? The Beatings are a four-piece band from Boston inspired by the Pixies, Superchunk, and Husker Du. They’re a sentimental, melodic, self-proclaimed band singing about transvestite bars, hangovers, and love. They’ve toured extensively throughout the country and definitely left their mark. This EP has great Post-punk melodies. Give it a listen if you’re a fan of the previously mentioned bands.(CD)-**Cain**

Behemoth "Conjuration" *(Olympic, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* This is a limited to 2000 piece new EP from arguably the best Death Metal band to ever come out of Poland. The disc features 10 tracks, one new original track, a Nine Inch Nails cover, a Venom cover, and seven live tracks recorded in October of 2001.This band never fails to amaze with the pure speed and sheer brutality of their songs, which of course doesn't even come close to what they produce live. Being that this is limited, there is no contemplation. If you are a Death Metal fan you need to get this or it will be gone forever. *Conjuration* comes is a very minimal digipack with the track listings, writing credits and a cover very reminiscent of Bathory. This is totally essential listening for those ready to step into the next great class of bands.(CD)-**Myk**

Belle & Sebastian “Dear Catastrophe Waitress” (*Rough Trade, 66 Golborne Rd, London, England, UK, W10 5PS.)* This is everything you’d expect from the sensual, orchestral Brit-Pop that is Belle & Sebastian. Trevor Horn, who has also worked with Tatu in the past, produced *Dear Catastrophe Waitress*. This is their sixth album in their seven-year existence and each track is wittier than the next. With songs about sex, loneliness, and of course failed love, you can’t go wrong. This band is a cheerful Scottish success with a very diverse fan base. You might hate it, or you might love it. Either way, check it out. I think it’s a fun foot-tapping record.(CD)-**Cain**

The Berlin Project “The Things We Say” *(Orange Peel, POB 15207, Fremont, CA 94539).* This band spent three years preparing the songs for this album. It’s kind of hard to tell though because it sounds like every other Pop Punk band in the world. The Berlin Project has a keyboardist, which adds to the energy and melody of the group. But they’re still a young band; maybe they’ll mature more over the years. It’s definitely MTV2 material along the lines of Good Charlotte and all those other bands. There’s nothing too experimental or unique about them; I wouldn’t recommend it to anyone.(CD)-**Cain**

Between the Buried and Me "The Silent Circus" *(Victory, 346 North Justine, Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607).* This is a blazing Metal record, plain and simple. The band has several influences, but all point to the extreme conclusion. This band could just as easily be on Earache as they are on Victory. Elements of Napalm Death, Stoner Rock, Morbid Angel, and Rorschach come together to make a blistering assault on the ears, which now somehow passes onto the Hardcore world because they have power chord breakdowns. Like many bands today, BTBAM do go off on a few tangents throughout the album that are totally off the beaten path. These are purely artistic unloadings and not necessarily indicative of the true nature of the band. This should appeal to fans of Coalesce, Black Army Jacket, or any of the Power Violence bands of the early '90s.(CD)-**Myk**

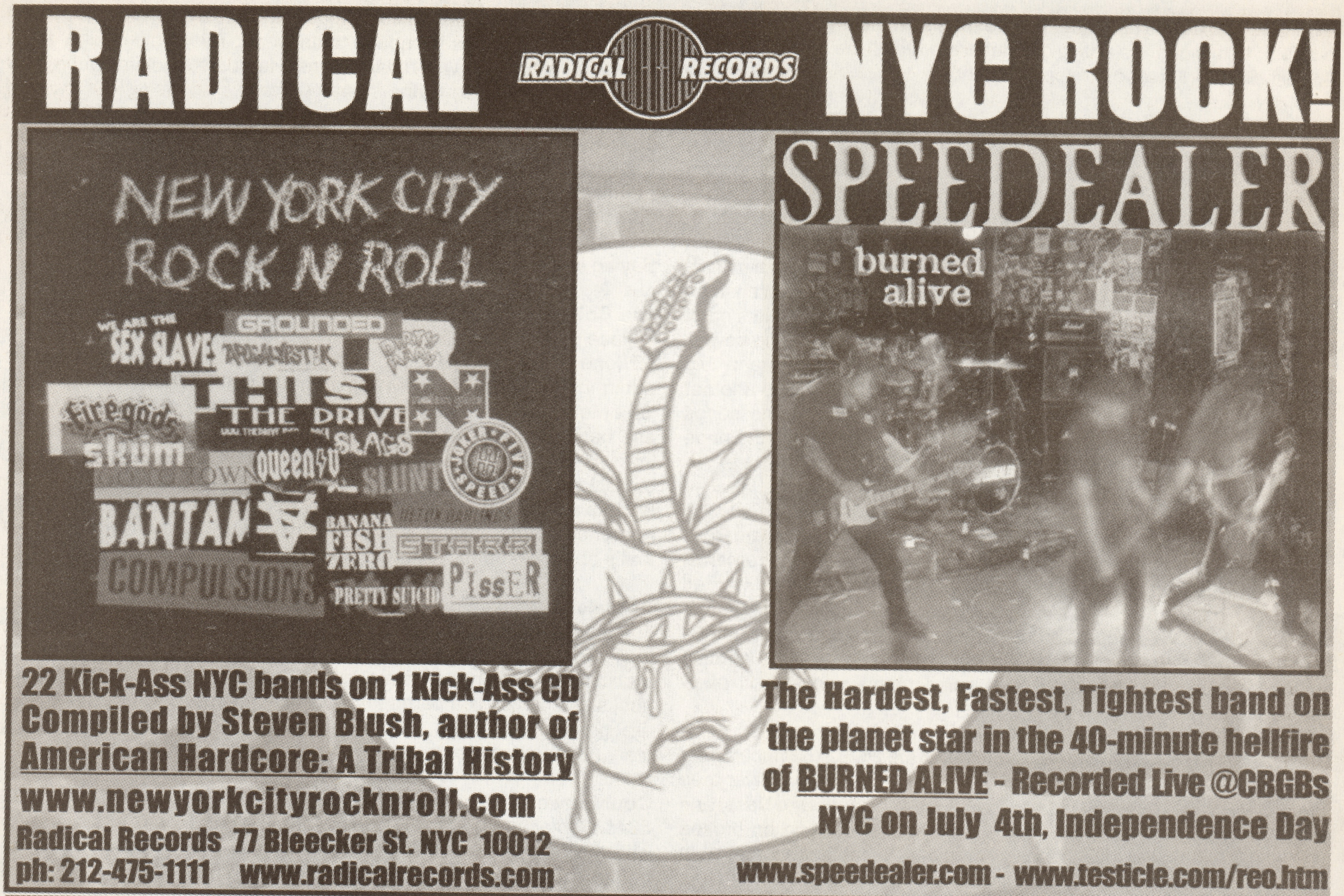
The Bled "Pass the Flask" *(Fiddler, 8023 Beverly Blvd, #5, POB 440, Los Angeles, CA 90048).* Another in the new breed of Metalcore bands that aren't playing totally destructive power chords all the time. Hardcore elements and song structures mix with Swedish style Metal to blow away the listener with bludgeoning choruses, full on beat down break downs and In Flames-like guitar riffing. While these guys aren't as powerful as As I Lay Dying or the Black Dahlia Murder, they will probably more appeal to the screamo scene with the lighter tones of their song structures. Like all these bands, they growl most of the songs but there are bits of singing thrown in here and there. The packaging for this record is excellent as well. A slipcase hides the whole thing, and inside a glossy silver sheet covers the lyrics, photos of the band and an artsy shoot of a topless guy and girl. The whole production and recording are really well done, and these guys should prove to be a power when people realize that the new Thursday album just isn't as good as the last one.(CD)-**Myk**

Bleeding Through “This Is Love, This Is Murderous” *(Trustkill, 23 Farm Edge Lane, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724).* Bleeding Through, contrary to popular belief, are more than Hardcore kids crossing over to the Metal scene. Apparently they’ve been influenced by Metal since their youth, even though the band is only four years old. The producer of this album, Ulrich Wild, has also worked with Pantera, Deftones and Static X, and of course you can hear it in the music. This is real tough-guy music, or “Metalcore.” Bleeding Through has toured with AFI, Hatebreed, FATA, and Eighteen Visions. I’m not too fond of this type of cult following of black hair and brass knuckles, but I know a lot of you are, so you’ll probably like this record.(CD)-**Cain**

Blood Has Been Shed "Spirals" *(Ferret, 167 Wayne St. # 409, Jersey City, NJ 07302).* This is one of New England's best known Hardcore bands. Ardent screams and weird time signatures are the defining theme for this band. Howard's vocals remind me of Justin from Godflesh, while the guitars have a dueling Thrash feel to them. The off-time aspect of the band is similar to Dillinger, Coalesce, and Meshuggah, where nothing is really where it seems it should be. At times it gets a little much, as all of the album is like this and there are no straight parts as a rule. Howard Jones, the vocalist, was also a member of Killswitch Engage, and you can experience his range here. This is more a of a thinking man’s album, and not a straight kickboxing album. Fans of Shadow's Fall, Killswitch Engage, and Skinlab should easily slip into the mindset for these 14 tracks.(CD)-**Myk**

Bouncing Souls "Anchors Aweigh" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).* I miss the days when the Souls did songs about their favorite movies or drinking too much coffee. There was a humor to those songs that has been lost over the years. These songs are more serious, and the band is a lot more mature, but that goes for the song writing as well. If there was a such ling as Adult Punk Contemporary, the Souls would be it. Adult Contemporary is the title they give to music that my parents would listen to. The Souls have that quality to a degree now. Their lyrics are far more insightful and their songs are better written and not so chaotic. They have grown up, as have many of their fans. They will appeal to us 30 something punks where some of the newer bands may get dismissed for whatever reason. This album is full of catchy choruses and probably has the best production of any Souls album to date. Greg's vocals on this album remind me a bit of Tim from Avail, just not as raspy. The guitar sound has a real Rock n' Roll sound to it, very Clash and Ramones, but at the same time very current and clean. This could very well be the band’s opus. While they may go on to do other good albums, they will be able to look at this point in their careers and see this as a defining moment for their musical direction.(CD)-**Myk**

Boysnightout "Make Yourself Sick" *(Ferret, 167 Wayne St. # 409, Jersey City, NJ 07302).* BNO play a style similar to Thursday and the Reunion Show, but in both cases, they take bits to the next level. In comparison to the Reunion Show, BNO is more melodic less whiney and during the chaotic screams they are more over the top. In comparison to Thursday, BNO has better vocals. The melodic vox are far more convincing and more tuneful; the screams are far more ardent than their major label contemporaries. The band hails from Canada and has secured an excellent lay out for the record including really cool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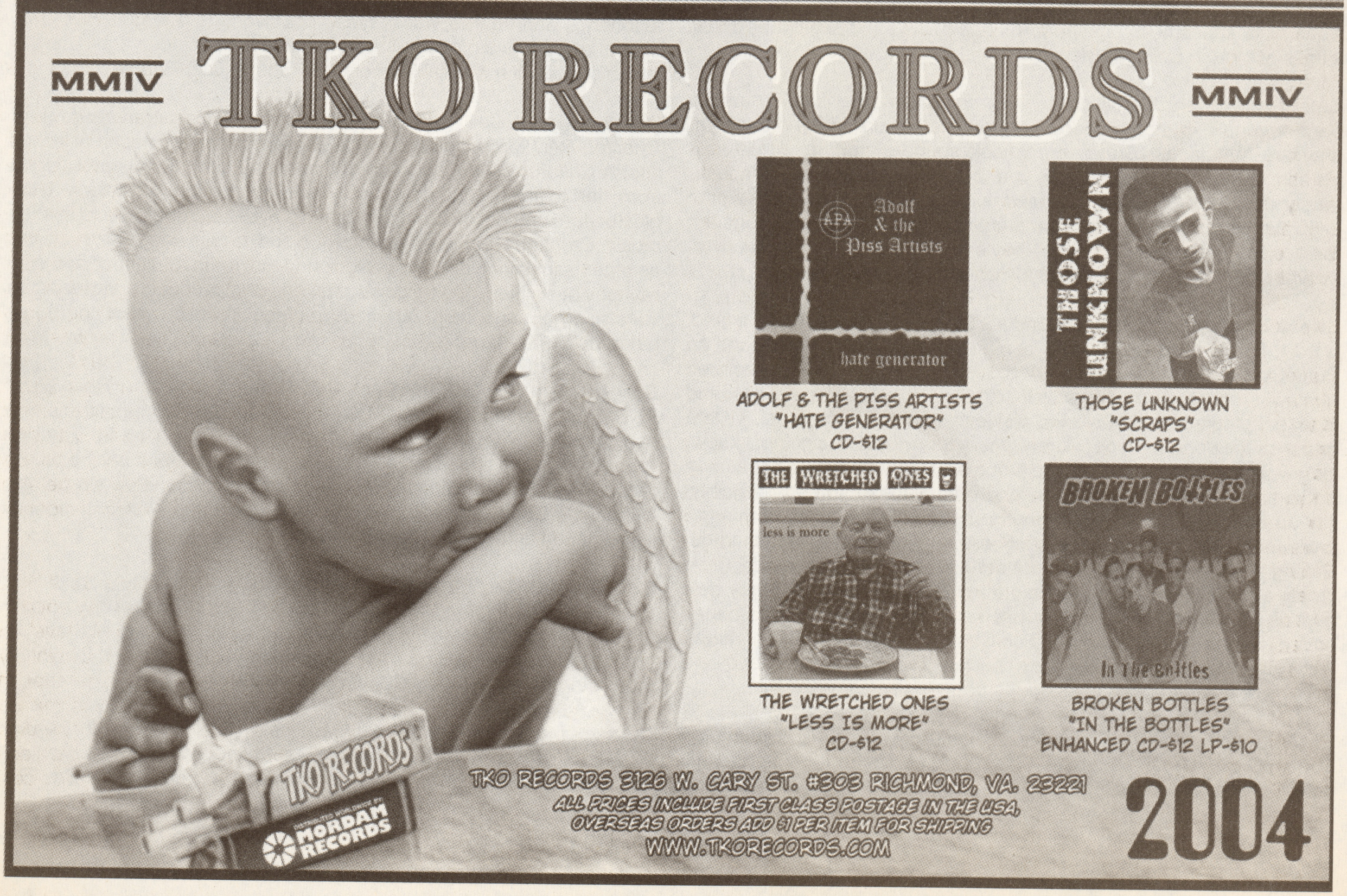
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2004

varnished booklets. The album has 10 tracks and is a good listen start to finish. As this genre starts to get cluttered with all the copycat bands, acts like BNO will rise to the top.(CD)-**Myk**

Calico System "The Duplicated Memory" *(Eulogy, POB 24913, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307)*. Bands like this are starting to become a dime a dozen. Everybody has a guy who can scream his lungs out and then will sing the choruses. Most of the screaming is pretty interchangeable, and the songs mostly consists of really tinny power chords and then some really wiry-sounding acoustic break. Calico System is just such a band. The vocalist's screams are fine. They don't distinguish him from anyone else in the other of the myriad of bands, but they aren't bad by any stretch. His sung vocals tracks are what really get me. He kind of reminds me of Rob from Black Train Jack without the booming power. They are sort of sheepish, not particularly good, and are a big detriment—without the power you lose the conviction. This is another Thrice style record, but it doesn't have the dynamics or the songs structures to match. An average offering which will get lost in the huge sea of like bands.(CD)-**Myk**

Cameron McGill “Stories of the Knife and the Back” *(Post-Important, www.cameronmcgill.com)*. These acoustic-based and low volume Rock songs are surrounded by an impressive array of supporting instruments, fleshing out the template that McGill’s playing provides. At first, I wanted to write this off as an act that would nestle perfectly into the background of a *Dawson’s Creek* rerun, but after listening a couple more times I started to at least to think the music isn’t that bad and the recording quality is tops, even if the lyrics at some points seem a bit over-emotional.(CD)-**KevTV**

Capture the Flag "Start From Scratch" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012)*. Detroit's Capture the Flag deliver their third full-length and it's quite good. Bringing to mind both Dag Nasty and early Down By Law, CTF deliver 11 solid tracks focusing on broken hearts and unrequited love. My only complaint is that the recording just seems to lack a certain punch that would put these songs over the top. The band almost sounds bored playing them at times, and unfortunately it seems to affect the overall performance of the tunes. I bet they'd tear it up live, though.(CD)-**McClernon**

Celebrity Murders "Demo 2003" *(www.celebritymurder.com)*. I saw this band a couple of months ago open for The Virus and lemme tell ya, they are the goods. Brutal, breakneck speed Hardcore with a little Thrash thrown in brought to you by ex-members of Milhouse, Indecision, and CR. In a short time they've become one of my favorite LIHC bands and if you give them a chance, they'll be in your constant rotation too. As an added bonus, they even do a friggin' 4 Skins cover, so what the fuck are you waiting for, chump?(CD)-**McClernon**

Cheap Sex “Launch Off to War” *(Punk Core , POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)*. Oh, we know what we’re in store for here. Every band on Punk Core shares the same wardrobe, so to find bleached and colored Mohawks and spiked collars was certainly not a surprise. The band logo that plagiarizes the Sex Pistols’ logo was no shock either. With a grasp on the band’s image, I knew where this music was going. I know, I know, I’m so smart to be able to judge a CD by its artwork. (You have no idea how bad I want to be wrong one of these times). Musically, Cheap Sex lives up to their name; forgettable, unoriginal, nothing to brag about, nothing to be proud of, and something anyone could do. Having a grasp of a style does not translate to having the ability to be creative and skilled. A lyric sample from “Dick Cheney;” “Cheney he’s part of the scandal, he’s too out of control to handle, Dick Cheney you’re a sign of the times, Hey Dick Cheney you’re no friend of mine.” I rest my case. Next time I get the opportunity to score some cheap sex, I’ll think of this band and pass on the opportunity.(CD)-**KevTV**

Christiansen “Stylish Nihilists” *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615)*. I thought that I hated all bands from California until now. Christiansen has a friendlier Mars Volta sound while still remaining original and different. It’s all about music and betrayal. The interchange of the bass and drums is enough to dance to. This is everything you’d want in an album. It’s well rounded Post-Hardcore, and fits right on the Revelation score.(CD)-**Cain**

Ciril "Hysteria Driven" *(Know, POB 90579, Long Beach, CA 90809)*. This reminds me of old Suicidal Tendencies. Whether or not done intentionally, I like the semi-distorted drum sounds, but I'm not a Hardcore guy. Nor a Bikini Kill fan (catch the "Rebel Girl" cover if you are). At least they're not using Pro Tools and sound like a real live band playing in the studio!(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Collapse *(Infernal Racket , POB 4641, Bethlehem, PA 18018)*. Philadelphia’s The Collapse serves up their debut offering, a six song EP (one track is an interlude). With so many bands holding a position within the Pop Punk genre, I’m starting to really understand what the ‘80’s Metal field day was like. Sometimes telling the difference between one band and another is much like distinguishing Ratt from Dokken from Whitesnake from Winger. Anyways, “Grain of Salt” is a good song, but lacks a convincing dose of originality. The last track, “Swear There Is,” has a bit of Weezer’s “Only In Dreams” breakdown quality to it. For reference points, Allister and Count the Stars are thanked inside so that’s about where this lies.(CD)-**KevTV**

Cordalene *(Manic Pop Thrill, 834 Ellsworth, Philadelphia, PA 19147)*. In reading this band's bio and press materials, I have a lot of respect for their work ethic and ideology as performers, but this EP doesn't particularly do it for me. It's moody Power Pop that isn't direct with the hooks and can be compared to Harvey Danger at points. Perhaps they are great live, though, as five songs generally don't tell the full story.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Countdown to Life “Tragedy Is So Irresistible” *(State of Grace, POB 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)*. Trite metallic/melodic mosh that leaves one with the haunting sensation that this has all been done many times before (and with better results). This mid-tempo outing, featuring a prominent Metalcore thwomp interspersed with “emotive” melodic resonance and hoarse, hackneyed vocal work, is a forgettable affair. Blending with the din of a hundred thousand like minded acts, there is little that is at all memorable about this record.(CD)-**Ramek**

Cranked Up! "A Call For Solidarity" *(Creep, 252 East Market St., West Chester, PA 19382)*. I caught these guys twice at CB's and they kicked ass! *A Call For Solidarity* is one of those albums that you can listen to from start to finish without frantically blowing through its tracks with the old forward button in hopes of finding a better tune. Through their music, Cranked Up! wages war on Emo and its followers, Nazis, as well as other issues including Punk Rock and the youth that support it. With raunchy bass lines, ripping guitar riffs, and drums coupled with snarling vocals, who can't help but find a place in their heart for these bastards?(CD)-**Manic**

Curl Up And Die “But the Past Ain't Through With Us” *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232)*. Apparently this is a part two of a two part EP series. The first one, *We May Be Through With the Past*, was released earlier this year on another label. For some reason Curl Up And Die remind me of a much heavier version of the Deftones. Good stuff, but there is a strange (but interesting) instrumental at the end.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Curl Up and Die “But the Past Ain't Through With Us” *(Revelation, POB 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232)*. I would rather be held at gunpoint and be forced to participate in a three-way with Al Sharpton and Jay Leno while Michael Moore documents the hypothetical event than listen to this album . (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Curse of the Golden Vampire “Mass Destruction” *(Ipecac, 356 Bowery #2, New York, NY 10012)*. *Mass Destruction* opens with electronic noise and continues on with…electronic noise. A whole lotta noise. The

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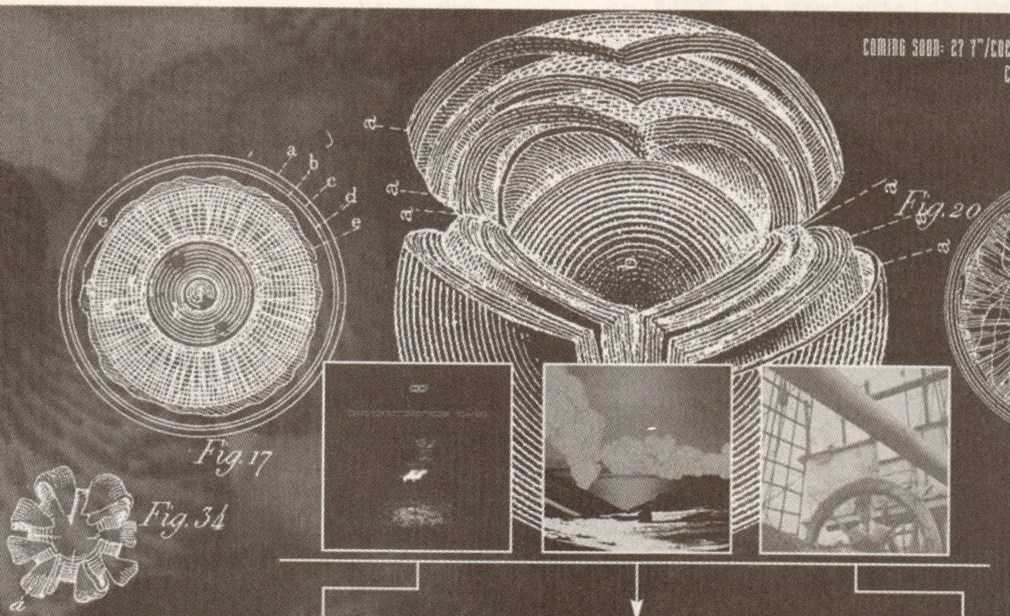

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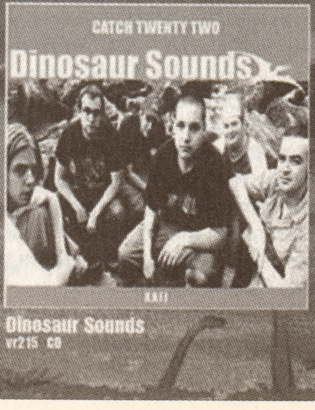

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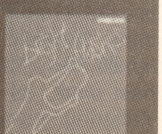

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electronic elements are fuzzed, like when you play your headphones too loud and it becomes a garbled mess. The chaos is overlaid with Metal vocals, and considering the background of the players (Justin Broadrick was in Napalm Death and Godflesh, among other projects) it's no surprise. I'm just glad I listened to this at work; I really think it would have blown out my speakers at home. Ipecac is really hit and miss. Curse of A Golden Vampire is a miss.(CD)-**KevTV**

CZOLGOSZ "Guernica" *(Rodent Popsicle, POB 1143, Allston, MA 02134).* CZOLGOSZ rocks a late '80s political Hardcore sound pretty good. They even have a saxophone on here! "Son Sen Khieu Samphan Pol Pot Ieng Sary" and "BA" are the hits here. I believe that when singing about politics you need a sense of humor, anarchist or not. But hey, at least they're singing about something that matters. A good pick for fans of Anti-Flag, Dead Kennedys, Minor Threat—you get the fucking point. And I also think Charlie Guiteau would've been a better band name.(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Thedscproject "Very Number One" *(591 NW Kilpatrick Ave., Port St. Lucie, FL 34983).* Boring Wimp-Rock. Jeez these guys suck! How is it possible that music keeps getting worse? Songs keep getting more banal. Bands keep getting stupider. Save me Jesus, save me from this bottomless pit of empty talent!(CD)-**Grego**

Dade County Resistance "Every Last Chance" *(Trend Is Dead! POB 444, Normal, IL 61761).* Ugh. Regurgitated Emo-bullshit only to be consumed by the general (stupid) public and shitted out in the form of a platinum record. You know what... fuck it; this jizz-rag isn't even worth being reviewed. Emo is a bunch of yuppie-douchebags congregating at fuckin Starbucks in hopes of reinventing the same old whiny bullshit shit-single about getting dumped and the hurt that lies in the form of an ex-girlfriend. Hey I've had an ex-girlfriend but I don't degrade myself on record by singing about "the break-up." Hey Emo-pansies, I've got one thing to say to you: "BOO-FUCKIN'-WHOO-WHOO!"(CD)-**Manic**

Danko Jones "Born A Lion" *(Simba, POB 5232, Huntington Beach CA 92615).* Danko leads a power-trio —on guitar and vocals—that has a big sound. He has a gruff voice and often talk-sings, sounding somewhere between Diamond Dave and Jonny Lang, carrying a lot of charisma and attitude. Although not slow and rather riff-heavy, a lot of Blues and Soul influence can be heard in *Born A Lion*, which is otherwise a Hard Rock album that should find a niche in the mainstream. If not, calling a song "Word Is Bond" is still amazing. (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Deadwater Drowning *(Black Market Activities, 23 Rand St., Revere, MA 02151).* Holy Death Metal! For fans of brutal and murderous music, Deadwater Drowning has toured with other insane bands such as The Black Dahlia Murder, Premonitions of War, and The Red Chord. The chords are irrelevant, complex, and aren't really pleasant sounding; you can't really make sense of them. But if you're a fan of Dying Fetus and Pig Destroyer, you'll love it. I think.(CD)-**Cain**

The Dead Milkmen "Now We Are 20" *(Restless/Rykodisc, 30 Irving Place, 3rd Fl, New York NY 10003).* Most people know The Dead Milkmen from their off-beat hit "Punk Rock Girl," which actually is not included on this compilation of rare, live and unreleased tracks. They were an original band, at best, and the liner notes contain testimonials from various musicians and artists that The Milkmen had influenced. Too weird for me, however.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Decapitated "The First Damned" *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125).* This CD is a re-issue of the bands two demos and some live tracks that led to their current record deal. Decapitated is quickly running up the ranks of the Polish Death Metal Hierarchy. The demo tracks on this disc are better than most bands you hear signed to labels these days. Actually, I think these might be some of the band's best work, as they haven't totally gone guttural and resemble the Yattering more than they do Mortician. The precision of the guitar playing is unreal ,and as demos go, the sound quality is stellar. This is really an import on Metal Mind, a Polish label, but is distributed in the US through Seasons of Mist. This band will make you forget about the current mainstays like Six Feet Under and Deicide because Decapitated is just so much more talented. Remember, this is just their demos and their best work (in my opinion).(CD)-**Myk**

Deep 13 "Eleven Stories" (*Eugene, POB 1981, Lexington, KY 40508).* Thrash, circa 1983. I can't listen to this shit. It's weak even by '83 standards. (CD)-**Grego**

Defiance "Complete Singles Collection" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953).* Like the Punk Core bands that came before them, Defiance offers its listeners the same aggression and chaos-driven rage that you've come to expect from the likes of the Casualties and A Global Threat. It's that undeniable incendiary force that made those guys the artists that they are today, and it's what makes Defiance stand as "equals" amongst them. I'm familiar with Punk Core Records, but I must admit that this would be the first listen I've ever given to Defiance. This band is one that will grow on you. If you're a fan of the Punk Core roster than the transition from, "What the fuck..." to "This band's great," should be fairly smoother than those who've never heard of Punk Core. Give 'em some time and I'll guarantee that you'll come to appreciate this band.(CD)-**Manic**

Defiance "No Future No Hope" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953).* This reissue of their 1995 album should give all the Selden punks something to sing along to. Note to kids who want to grow a mohawk and start a Punk Rock band: "Fuck Them All," "Fodder," " Fuck this City," and "No Future No Hope" are what your songs should sound like. And be sure to actually **listen** to the band before you pin their patch on your jacket!(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Defiance "Nothing Lasts Forever" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953).* This is the political Street Punk that is so underrated in the underground scene these days. Defiance is an Oregon-based band that has the classic Punk sound and the look of studded leather jackets, mohawks, liberty spikes, and leopard-print hair. You can actually feel the stabbing of metal spikes from leather jackets in the pit, through their negative, political lyrics and fast drumming. Real Punk at its finest. (CD)-**Cain**

Deinonychus "Mournument" *(My Kingdom, POB 31, 84015 Nocera Sup.re (SA) Italy).* Grind-core-esque, complex Metal. Yeah, no thanks.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Del Rey "Darkness & Distance" *(My Pal God, 47 Hardy Dr., Princeton, NJ 08540).* Seven instrumental tracks that turn out to be length of a full album; the shortest selection, "Vega," is five minutes and 53 seconds. The songs encompass all ends of the Rock and Electronic spectrums—without being Techno or completely computer-reliant—and show a lot of thought, but most of this is a snooze. I don't listen to music for it to just be in the background...(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Desa "Demonstrates Birth" *(Substandard, POB 310, Berkeley, CA 94701).* Without being cheesy, these four songs sound radio-ready and I would furthermore assume that K-Rock listeners would be into this. However, this was all recorded in one day of August 2002, and here we are in November 2003 reviewing this, so sadly, who knows what Desa sounds like now... (CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Desert City Soundtrack "Funeral Car" *(Deep Elm, POB 36939, Charlotte, NC 28236).* Desert City Soundtrack are a Post- Hardcore band with a piano. DCS have many elements to fill in their sound: noisy guitars, melodic trumpet, and, at times, dual vocals. They really jump well from mellow piano to a full band screaming noise. I would defiantly recommend this to fans of 3mile Pilot and Blackheart Procession, but only if you want to hear some dynamic heavy music. This is a great disc.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

The Desert Fathers "The Spirituality" *(ThreeSpheres, POB 349, Brooklyn , NY 11222)*. This was "recorded by" Steve Albini, but I fail to find anything that draws me in. All of these songs take too long for vocals or any sort of hook to kick in. Good instrumental performances, at the very least.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Desert Sessions Volumes 9 & 10 "I See You Hearin' Me" / "I Heart Disco" *(Ipecac, 356 Bowery #2, New York, NY 10012)*. With my relatively recent interest in all things Queens of the Stone Age comes this compact disc of the often-discussed Desert Sessions that sees Queens frontman Josh Homme teamed up with an assorted cast of characters to bust out the jams. To name drop, some of the artists on here are PJ Harvey, Dean Ween, Twiggy Ramirez, Troy Van Leeuwen, and drummer extraordinaire Josh Freese. Nice cast of characters, but what about the stuff that matters, the music? Some tunes take the low and sludgy sound Homme has created in his other musical endeavors and infuse it with looser playing and broader instrumentation, while some other tracks ("Holey Dime" and "Powdered By Wig Machine" being two) are more adventurous and subtle. Opener "Dead In Love" starts with heavy southern-ish riffing before breaking to a spacey and more ambient section featuring tenor sax and Homme's piercing guitar lead. "Covered In Punk's Blood" is about as aggressive as Homme will go, and the drumming by Joey Castillo shines on this under two-minute instrumental. PJ Harvey handles vocals for a few songs and adds another unique layer of sound. It's a jam record without being self-indulgent; music created amongst friends and musicians for the sake of music, not trying to one-up each other. Some Desert Sessions songs have made their way onto QOTSA records, so something here might be a sneak preview; who knows?(CD)-**KevTV**

Destruction "Metal Discharge" *(Nuclear Blast, Oeschstrasse 40, 73072 Donzdorf, Germany)*. With a band name and album title like this on a label like that, you should exactly how this CD sounds. Too bad we're almost in 2004, eh?(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

DFI *(Honey Bear, 2326 Pennsylvania Ave., Superior, WI 54880)*. Woo-wee, DFI is definitely an eclectic and crazy bunch of musical mischief-makers! I find it to be somewhat of a difficult task to properly categorize the maniacal sonic weirdness contained within this disc, but it's certainly chaotic, discordant, mathematical, and psychopathic. Mind-swirling snippets of Punk, Industrial, Metal, Lounge, Hardcore, Alt-Rock, and New Wave are aggressively tossed into a hodgepodge mishmash of primal noise. Most of these demented tunes are instrumentals clocking in at less than a minute apiece. I honestly don't know what to make of it all, but I'd be willing to bet that this is what a snuff film soundtrack must surely sound like. If there were any justice to be had, DFI would be loudly blasted on a daily basis in the dreary halls of lunatic asylums the world over to stoke the inner demons of the criminally insane.(CD)-**Moser**

The Dickel Brothers "Volume Two" *(Empty, POB 12034, Seattle, WA 98102)*. The Dickel Brothers rowdily crank-out a rootin'-tootin' cornucopia of hayseed hillbilly music boisterously flitting with rural Jesse James-style sourmash twang. These rustic heart-of-America hoe-down ditties and forlorn, broken-hearted backwoods ballads are heartily driven by an ear-pleasing accompaniment of fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, bass, washboard, and huckleberry, drawling vocals. Damn, I must admit that I enthusiastically enjoyed this unique change of musical scenery, which will zestfully serenade my auditory senses until the cows come home. Whooo-doggy, swing your partners and dosey doe!(CD)-**Moser**

Discordance Axis "Original Sound Version 1992-1995" *(Hydra Head, POB 990248, Boston, MA 02199)*. Not too long ago I received the Discordance Axis DVD that Hydra Head released. I was totally awestruck by the fact that I thought it was utter garbage. I even went back to the *Inalienable Dreamless* CD that I had kept to see if I was losing my mind. Now comes a compilation CD that features all the band's hard to find demos, splits, comp tracks and live stuff. After listening to it and looking through the immensely intricate liner notes I have come to the conclusion that the DVD must really be a sub par exception. This is precious Grindcore; you'll understand why this band has become legendary on the underground scene. It's pure chaos that ranges from early Napalm Death to current bands like Regurgitate and Circle of Dead Children. You can marvel at the blazing drum fury that is Dave Whitte and the complex, lightning fast Rob Marton guitar riffs, and not for one instant forget the gut-wrenching vocals performed by Jon Chang. You get 69 tracks and a complete history all in one DVD sized case. It doesn't get better than this in the realm of the extreme.(CD)-**Myk**

The Early November "The Room's Too Cold" *(Drive-Thru, POB 55234, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413)*. You ought to know the "Drive-Thru sound" when you hear it—Rx Bandits and Steel Train being obvious exceptions. Melodic and unthreatening, but kudos to the label for including a DVD along with the CD. There's a cameo from The Starting Line's Kenny Vasoli on "Fluxy."(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Eastern Youth "What Can You See From Your Place?" *(FiveOne,Inc., POB 1868, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1868)*. "Eastern Youth is the Fugazi of Japan." That might go down as one of thee dumbest things I have ever heard. This is the new album from these Japanese songwriters. They sing in Japanese. You see, you're supposed to listen to the music and read the interpretation in the liner notes, and then you get all emotional and cry... oh fuck throw this shit out and gimme Teengenerate! And, to whoever made the Fugazi comparison, I hope you get a cyst on your tongue!(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Ed Gein "It's A Shame" *(Hex, 201 Maple Lane, N. Syracuse, NY 13212)*. First off, great band name. I totally wish I thought of it. Second, the *Donnie Darko* soundbytes throughout the record are brilliant as well; it's one of the best flicks I've seen in years, and the clips really fit the "end of the world" feeling the band's music conveys to the listener. Unfortunately, the music itself really isn't for me. Grindy, metallic Hardcore with chaotic tempo changes and vocals screamed until the vocalist's larynx is ready to burst. They do it well, and I could see this being someone's new favorite record—just not mine.(CD)-**McClernon**

Electric Vision *(www.electricvision.org)*. Electric Vision (formerly known as Glamorous Glennis and A Lucy Nation before that) energetically embroil themselves in a funky, psychedelic firestorm of sonically celestial proportions. The narcotic vaporized vocals are at times abrasive and gruff and then, at other times, boyish and pure. A pristinely cascading swirl of hypnotic rhythm guitar crunch is perfectly embellished with the most tantalizing intergalactic leads to ever traverse a fretboard. The bass and drums playfully frolic and thunderously intermingle with each other in an awe-inspiring display of bone-rattling unity. This CD possesses all of the natural unbridled energy, ominous beauty, and elegant fury of an unstoppable full-force hurricane. It's the perfect stimulative soundtrack for smoking dope, drinking beer, and, especially, partaking in sweaty marathon bouts of sexual intercourse. Who's to argue with that, I wonder?(CD)-**Moser**

Enon "Hocus Pocus" *(Touch & Go, POB 25342, Chicago, IL 60625)*. Enon's follow up to last year's amazing release, *High Society*, gives me mixed feelings; I really like it, but I'm also a little disappointed. Enon are masters at finding sounds and tone to fit their songs, but this album finds less guitar and more electronic stuff—I was hoping for a more guitar-laden album. Some of my favorite songs are towards the end of the album. It's still good.(CD)-**Mr. Noiz**

Entombed "Inferno" *(Koch, 740 Broadway, New York, NY 10003)*. Don't let the boring cover fool you—this is the real Entombed, and they are back with a pretty fierce offering. While I don't feel that *Inferno* lives up to the promise of *Morning Star*, this is still one of the better albums they have released over the last decade. Distorted guitars with a really big sound are the basis for all of these tracks. Because of the doomish feel to the album, you at times lose the bass, but the drums are fairly up front and prove Peter is picking up the slack that Nicke left. This album isn't a return to the *Left Hand Path* days. The band are still playing a sort of Black Rock style of music, but it is far from the *Same Difference* crap of a few years ago. If you haven't heard Entombed in a while, this is a good record to jump back in on. If you long for their Death Metal supremacy, you can still ignore their existence. Fans of later COC and other filthy sounding Stoner bands will be overjoyed with this.(CD)-**Myk**

Evil Beaver "Pleased to Eat You" *(Johann's Face, POB 479164, Chicago, IL 60647).* Evil Beaver? Yes, in reference to the vagina. Songs about the vagina, all imaginable phrases, complete with pictures inside. Vagina humor is funny when it's not so overused. Evil Beaver is two chicks playing Alt-Metal or Punk with just bass and drums. It is not interesting in any way for many reasons, mostly because you don't want to hear of a band and immediately associate them with genitals. This type of shock value is not going to provide the band success, especially with titles such as "Ass Salad," "The Nutcracker" and "Where's the Beef?" Why is this is so gross?(CD)-**Cain**

Far From Breaking "The Identity CD" *(Youngblood, POB 236, Ephrata, PA 17522).* This CD compiles the band's *Identity* 7" with their early 7" called *Made My Choice*, and they are my new favorite band. This is Hardcore the way it should be. Elements of Chain of Strength, Uppercut, Wide Awake, No For An Answer and Bold are all present in these finger pointing, flat top, hoody-wearing Straight Edge track; it's total Youth Crew stuff, and really well done. This is one of those rare finds, and you don't care what era it was recorded in. This gets the feeling and point across from the first note, the way it was always supposed to. This totally rules and if you have ever liked SEHC bands, you'll love this for sure.(CD)-**Myk**

Farmakon "A Warm Glimpse" *(Earache, 43 West 38th St, 2nd Fl, New York, NY 10018).* You often hear of bands that are called "Jazz-Metal Fusion" or "Lounge Rock" or some other ridiculous boast because one part of one song on an album differs from the rest of the band's tracks. Farmakon truly is one of those hybrid bands. Jazz, Black Metal, Folk, Gothic, Classical and I think even a bit of Electronica are all combined here. There are times this album could be found spinning on K-Rock, but then the next track rips into a blistering Death-Metal/Thrash part that could be comparable to early Destruction or Sodom. This is a very cleverly constructed album, showcasing the band's overall ability and musical tastes. Fans of Arcturus, Ulver, and Virgin Black should really appreciate the experimental depth that is found here. The vocalist has a range similar to Garm's, going from clean to blistering screams, back to clean without missing so much as a note. I won't lie; this isn't for everyone and for those that will appreciate this, it will take more than one listen. This album could take a lifetime to totally get a grasp of, but at least these guys are doing something that warrants that kind of time spent.(CD)-**Myk**

Fireball Ministry "The Second Great Awakening" *(Nuclear Blast, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* Not all bands that play '70's inspired Rock need to be sullen and uneventfully slow. Fireball Ministry plays some of the most up tempo ZZ Top-inspired Rock and Roll you will hear anywhere. Crisp vocals and powerful grooves are the basis for these songs. There are remnants of Ozzy-era Black Sabbath in the vocals, but in tone only, as James Rotas' vocals border on crooning. These guys should quickly rise to the level of Queens of the Stone Age, Unida, and Fu Manchu despite this already being their third release. If the world is truly ready for a Classic Rock revival it's here. Fans of Sabbath, Skynyrd, Soundgarden, ATP, and Saint Vitus should take notice. This is true Rock with no fillers or bad effects to cover up lousy musicianship.(CD)-**Myk**

The Flash Express "Introducing the Dynamite Sound of The Flash Express" *(www.hititnowrecords.com).* The wild and spectacular aural outrageousness of The Flash Express is indeed dynamite and explosive beyond belief! It's a spastic Garage Rock volcanic eruption with a booty-wigglin' funk groove that sounds like The Stooges, MC5, and The Hives settin' the streets of Detroit on fire during the middle of an Armageddon-style riot. The vocals are a barbaric, tonsil-shredding outburst of brazen "fuck you" attitude, and the guitar screams, screeches, and seethes as if it were hell-bent on fiery, unrepentant self-destruction. The bass rumbles like Oprah Winfrey's bulbous fat ass uncontrollably bouncing on an electrified toilet seat, and the drums boom-bang along like hot shards of brimstone relentlessly hitting the simmering tin roof of Satan's purgatorial love shack deep in the heart of Hades. I'm not gonna lie to you, kiddies; this flesh-mutilating CD is all-at-once brutal, harsh, seductive, and mesmerizing. Be prepared to get the snot knocked out of you upon first hearing The Flash Express.(CD)-**Moser**

Forever Is Forgotten "The Architecture Is Still Burning" *(Thorp, POB 6786, Toledo, OH 43612).* While this band is easily identified as a Metalcore band, they really don't fit the bill. The vocals sound closer to something like The Locust or one of the other Power Violence/Grindcore bands going on right now. The guitar riffs are at least based in some kind of Slayer following, but the structures of the songs at times bring Tool to mind. The CD is dissonant and chaotic. Math Rock in the realm of Dillinger Escape Plan quickly comes to mind and parts really remind me of Judas Iscariot (the Punk band, not the Metal band) with their controlled chaos and fits of musical rage. Experimental Death Metalcore is about as good a label I'll ever get to putting this to words. There is way too much going on for that.(CD)-**Myk**

Found Dead Hanging "Dulling Occam's Razor" *(Black Market Activities, 23 Rand St., Revere, MA 02151)..* This is Sludge/Hardcore/Metal/Grind from Syracuse. Keith Allen from Found Dead Hanging is actually the coordinator of Hellfest, and if that's not enough credibility, they have shared the stage with the Haunted, In Flames, Isis and Lamb of God. FDH is picking up where their previous band, the August Prophecy left off via disharmony and brutal anger.(CD)-**Cain**

Fu Manchu "Go For It...Live!" *(SPV, POB 203, 1917 West 4th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6J 1M7).* Fuck yeah! This double disc live album once and for all proves why Fu Manchu is one of the reigning kings of Stoner Rock. There is not one second of non grooving Stoner glory anywhere on this album. Twenty two tracks including their cover of "Godzilla" make up a set that was recorded in both Sweden and Los Angeles. The recording is perfect and the band is so totally on. You really can feel the vibe on this record like few others you've ever heard. A must own for anybody who has ever picked up a Stoner record or gotten high to a Sabbath album. Fuck the White Stripes and Strokes and any other band that claims to play that Retro Rock shit; this is the **real** Retro Rock. This is the real '70s and these guys have more talent in a finger than those fuckers could ever dream of.(CD)-**Myk**

Geminus Sect "Gemination" *(Sin Klub, POB 2507, Toledo, OH 43606).* I'm not a big fan of Industrial music—I have a few albums that I like, though. Looking at the cover, I thought I would hate this album, but that isn't the case. It reminds me of a cross between NIN's *Pretty Hate Machine* and 1000 Homo DJs with Rob Zombie doing some very effect-laden vocals. The music is very guitar heavy and the vocals are doomy and hypnotic. The drums could use a little pepping up, but the main percussion on the album is the bass beat anyway. I can't say that this album will compel me to go out and find more Techno-Metal bands, but it at least opens me up to the fact that a few decent ones still exist.(CD)-**Myk**

Gene Vincent and the Blue Caps "Gene Vincent Rocks and the Blue Caps Roll" *(Capital....Does the address really matter?)* If Wesley Willis where still alive he would probably say "Gene Vincent is as bad as a broke dick dog" and he would be right. I choose Gene Vincent over Elvis for one reason; Chuck D! This album is pretty fucking amazing from the start with "Brand New Beat," and then into a great rendition of " By the Light of the Silvery Moon" which is my favorite number on the album. This reissue has Vincent's staple, "Frankie and Johnnie," which I'm waiting for Pansy Division to cover. Great Rockabilly diddies like "Flea Brain," "Rollin' Danny," and "It's No Lie" are all over this album, as well as slow ballads like "You'll Never Walk Alone," "You Belong to Me," and "In My Dreams". So to all, of you greasers that where listening to Edna's Goldfish just a few years ago, pick this up and burn those Elvis albums because your friends will think you're cool.... Unless you tell them that you used to listen to Edna's Goldfish—then they'll just think you're an asshole.(LP)**-Cyst Vicious**

The Generators "From Rust to Ruin" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)*. I must shamelessly confess; The Generators are one of my favorite bands happening today. They play gutsy, melody-rich Street Punk rambunctiously adorned with infectious, intricately textured hooks galore. They do it with a rugged, yet pristine, flair that brings to mind the insolent jailhouse bravado of The Clash, Social Distortion, and US Bombs (only a lot more polished). I was overwhelmingly transfixed with The Generators' first couple of TKO-released discs, and I thoroughly, assertively recommend this dandy pulsating platter of Punk Rock rowdiness to you all. It's a 14-track collection of rarities, comp cuts, and various other odds and ends. As always, the musicianship is stellar and energetic, and the lyrics are articulate, observant, and streetwise. If my ears suddenly malfunctioned after all these years of decibel abuse and I became deaf at this very moment, I'd still die a happy man knowing that The Generators were the last sound I ever heard. Now if that ain't a hearty, fanatical endorsement, then I don't know what is. "It's time, it's time to get generated," indeed! (CD)**-Moser**

Generous Maria "Command of the New Rock" *(Abstract, POB 41084, Philadelphia, PA 19127)*. One must understand, this album has monkeys on the cover, so in my book that's automatically a reason to like something. Unfortunately, this album doesn't sit as well with me as our furry friends. This is a late '70's/ early '80's Rock record that is really well-recorded and the songs are pretty good, but they sound exactly like Guns N Roses to me and I fucking hate that band. The vocalist could be a dead ringer for Axel, and with the effects they used it's really convincing. This album is a little dirtier than say *Appetite*..., but not enough so to turn off fans of GNR. If you like said band, you really should check this out. If you're like me and just have a long standing hatred of GNR then you really won't like this. Imagine a cross between GNR and Bad Wizard and that's pretty close to Generous Maria.(CD)**-Myk**

Genuine "Bury the Hatchet: Discography" *(State of Grace, POB 8345 Berkeley, CA 94707)*. Malicious sXe mayhem prevails, as grime-ensnared mid-tempo Hardcore gives way to spastic, fast paced volleys. Though at intervals succumbing a bit too much of the mid-tempo riff chug, this comprehensive effort reflects a largely straight forward drive that rarely wanes in its display of aural force. The tried and true structural schematics of youth crew Hardcore are here infused with tortured, malicious resonance and a blaring axe roar, ensuring a largely propulsive listen.(CD)**-Ramek**

GG Allin and Antiseen "Murder Junkies" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)*. How utterly appropriate and downright ironic that this particular skull-cracking TKO release has a catalog number of 666. The dreaded "number of the beast" certainly befits the dark, violent, and psychopathic sounds contained herein. The first 10 tracks, originally recorded in 1991, pair the diabolical, poop-slinging king of scum rock (GG Allin) with the hell-raising, shotgun-toting Antiseen boys. The remaining five sick-as-fuck ditties are culled from a couple of flesh-mauling 7-inchers (including Mr. Allin's final recording session in 1993) that GG and Antiseen brutally unleashed upon an unsuspecting public in the early '90s. Full of unbridled rage and seething, eardrum-scarring savagery, this is the type of devastating musical madness that makes the sky turn pitch black at high noon and causes all the damn tweeting birds to shed their feathers and fall dead from the trees. It reeks of blood, vomit, whiskey, grime, brutality, and diseased filth, and it's performed with such unstoppable, reckless abandon that it inspires sheer gut-churning terror from beginning to end. After just one listen, I've come to the inarguable conclusion that *Murder Junkies* certainly ain't intended to be heard by the ears of a civilized society. Outlaws, misfits, rebels, and social rejects will eat this up big time; I shit you not.(CD)**-Moser**

The Gits "Seafish Lounge" *(Broken Rekids, POB 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402)*. Holy shit! I cannot stop listening to this fucking album! Do yourself a favor and sell those Billy Joel albums (you know who you are) and buy this. No, seriously, this is a phenomenal album. Whether you're into Punk, Indie Rock, Rap, Salsa, Gospel, Christian rock, Funk, Ska, Rock, or whatever the kids are listening to nowadays this album should be in your CD or record player. Now I usually stray from live albums, but this is one of the best live recordings I have ever heard. The guitars are as brutal as the LAPD and Mia Zapata had a set of pipes that could compete with Janis Joplin. Why are you still reading this?(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

Good Riddance "Bound By Ties of Blood and Affection" *(Fat Wreck Chords, POB 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690)*. Good Riddance was one of the few early Fat bands I really liked, even if I did think they sounded a wee bit too much like Fat Mike's own band, much like every other member of the first Fat lineup. But on their latest full-length, Good Riddance has shed any noticeable resemblance to NOFX and have their feet firmly entrenched in their own brand of melodic Hardcore. What puts Good Riddance above so many bands in this genre is how tight a band they are, due in part to the inclusion of Punk Rock's greatest drummer, Dave Wagenschutz of Kid Dynamite fame, as well as the genuine intelligence Russ puts behind his lyrics. He's knowledgeable about politics, that's for sure, but he doesn't come off as condescending, which is a breath of fresh air in a time of finger-pointing criticism without answers. I hadn't listened to this band in a number of years, but this record will certainly get a few more spins.(CD)**-McClernon**

Gov't Mule "The Deepest End" *(ATO, www.mule.net)*. If you like Jam-Rock, this double CD will be at the top of your Top 10 list for 2003. It's a double-disc live set that features more than six hours of music between the two sets and the DVD. Since this show came following the death of bassist Allen Woody, in his place is a revolving lineup of bassists from Les Claypool and Jason Newsted to Mike Gordon and Victor Wooten with additional cameos from Bela Fleck and P-Funk's Bernie Worrell —and I've only named a handful of the participants. The epitome of value, folks.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

Grandpaboy "Dead Man Shake" *(Anti, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Another under-alias album from Replacements frontman Paul Westerberg, although *Dead Man Shake* really **is** the "album of Blues-Rock-Country" that it is advertised to be. John Prine and Hank Sr. covers included, this one is for the people that usually find solace in the music put out by Epitaph subsidiary Anti. Super lo-fi.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

Grandpaboy "Dead Man Shake" *(Fat Possum/Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. I loved the Replacements, but this is just too much. Hillbilly, whiteboy Blues recorded in what sounds like an echo chamber. Paul Westerberg has put together a slow-moving album that really doesn't showcase his musical talents. The lyrics are really well done, but the songs sound like they might be Rolling Stones reject tracks, the kind that show up on those "found lost tapes" collections. Actually, this album reminds me a lot of the Jimi Hendrix album *Woke Up This Morning and Found Myself Dead*. It is a live album recorded at a little club in NYC in which a beyond drunken Jim Morrison gets on stage and jams with Jimi. Needless to say it is total chaos and if it wasn't for pure historical documentation of these two playing together, anyone in their right mind would have destroyed the tapes. Paul Westerberg is owed a lot for the music he created in the past. This album is a "just because" type of thing.(CD)**-Myk**

Green Carnation "A Blessing In Disguise" *(Seasons of Mist, POB 29364, Philadelphia, PA 19125)*. This is the third album from this band in three years and they continue to get better. Featuring Tchort of Emperor fame and members who were part of the now defunct In the Woods, Green Carnation plays a mix between Black Metal, Gothic Folk music and Pink Floyd. *A Blessing In Disguise* features some of the most diverse tracks you will hear anywhere. Elements of *The Wall* are mixed with Scandinavian Folk music and even some Classic Rock at points. The album is dark and moody and has more in common with Bauhaus and Skinny Puppy than it does with Tchort's Emperor. This dark beauty that will appeal to fans of In the Woods, acoustic Ulver, the newest Tiamat, and Winds. By far, this is the band's best album to date, as they have shed much of their experimental tendencies from the last couple of offerings.(CD)**-Myk**

Grimfist "Ghouls of Grandeur" *(Candlelight US, POB 29459, Philadelphia, PA 19106)*. This is fucking evil. Featuring members of Immortal and Deride while be produced by Peter Tagtgren only leads on to believe this will be as extreme as anything you have ever heard. Carcass style grindcore mixed with Norwegian Black Metal and Florida style Death Metal is only the basic structure of these songs. At times the songs feature total beat down tracks like a Hardcore album and then the lace off into blazing Bay area Thrash Metal. Soilwork is a more current band that comes to mind at certain points because of Grimfist's diversity in tack structure, but most of the time I'm thinking Impetigo and Necroticism era Carcass. This is an exercise in violence on a Marduk size level. If this is the bands debut release, we should be scared of what could come next.(CD)**-Myk**

Guff "Engine Trouble" *(Go Kart, POB 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012)*. Pretty radio-friendly Pop Punk that I could see sandwiched between Blink182 and Alkaline Trio on MTV2. In fact, that may be the best way to describe this band's sound, although they tend to play a little faster than the two previously mentioned bands do. Very catchy indeed, and hats off to actually throwing a little Punk into your Pop Punk. It seems a lot of bands that associate themselves with the genre have forgotten 50% of the equation.(CD)**-McClernon**

Hallowmass *(www.hallowmass.vze.com)*. Though the production is an amateurish, low-key affair (definitely a DIY job), Hallowmass shows promise and plenty of potential with these three pogo-bouncing punk ditties that sound like they were recorded in an abandoned, dirt-floored basement. Listening to the two fist-pumping originals and a sloppy, tuned-down cover of The Misfits' "She," I get the impression that Hallowmass is a raging bundle of angry, disaffected youthfulness ready to explode at any given moment. I can also tell that they probably just recently began playing their instruments, but what they lack in musical aptitude, they certainly make up for it with sincerity, dedication, and abundant hyperactive energy levels. Stick with it, Hallowmass; today's generation of scruffy, disillusioned youth is absolutely starved for such primitive Punk Rock fury as yours.(CD)**-Moser**

Harold Ray "Live In Concert" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)* A bunch of punked-up Soul covers with art suggesting that Harold Ray is a legend who's moved on to playing nursing homes. Brilliant, especially if you like 60's-style Soul.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

Here's Your Warning "A Northwest Hardcore Compilation " *(Excursion, www.excursionrecords.com)*. Here's Your Warning is a surprisingly indiscriminate anthology, featuring a wide assortment of bands from the greater Northwestern Hardcore scene. Disparate sounds from the youth crew drenched bursts of Champion to the rugged Hardcore of The Answer are sampled alongside rapid fire Thrashcore from Rosary and the fractured Tech Metal of Divinity of Truth. On this wildly bi-polar 23 song outing, the layered melodic thrust of Staygold is complemented remarkably well by the distinctive metallic grit wielded by Himsa, as this record serves to suit an array of tastes across the spectrum of Hardcore Punk.(CD)**-Ramek**

Horace Pinker "Red-Eyed Regular" *(Offtime, POB 479176, Chicago, IL 60647)*. With over a decade's worth of time put in, Horace Pinker have certainly seen their fair share of ups and downs. They've had an EP released on Fat, have toured the country with Bad Religion, Green Day and Face to Face (amongst others), yet have never really caught on at a massive level, having to sit back and watch the current crop of Emo Pop/Punk bands that emulate their own style and sound swiftly pass them by. Even the addition of Chris Bauermeister on bass, following the demise of the mighty Jawbreaker, couldn't get Horace Pinker the attention they truly deserved. Perhaps *Red-Eyed Regular* will finally do them justice. Bauermeister is no longer in the band, but this five-song EP is closest in sound to *Copper Regret*, the first recording that featured him, and still their best. A great blueprint for what so many bands of the Emo genre strive to achieve.(CD)**-McClernon**

The Horror Pops "Hell Yeah" *(Hellcat/Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Featuring members of the Nekromantix (who I've never heard before), the Horror Pops play an exciting combo of Punk, Psychobilly, '50's Rock and New Wave with great success. Led by Patricia, whose vocals make my knees buckle and whose upright bass style makes me wish she was my girlfriend, is a great frontwoman with a tremendous amount of charisma and sensuality, and the rest of the band ain't bad either, haha. All joking aside, collectively the Horror Pops could be the next Cramps if they keep at it, with Siouxsie fronting the band. Keep an eye out.(CD)**-McClernon**

In the Woods "Live At the Caledonien Hall" *(End, 331 Rio Grande #58, Salt Lake City, UT 84101)*. This is genius, two discs collecting some 130 minutes of live tracks from this super original Norwegian band's swan song. Twenty tracks, including almost the entire *Omnio* album and the band's amazing cover of "White Rabbit" come packed with a slipcase and a sampler from the new label run by ITW band members. After listening to this album I finally understood why Deadheads get so excited about getting new bootleg Dead shows. In the Woods was like Black Metal's Grateful Dead, with epic pieces and psychedelia mixing for a Prog/Black/Stoner/Pink Floyd sound that has never again been attempted and for sure will never be achieved again. Without a band like In the Woods I seriously doubt that bands like Opeth could have achieved what they have gone on to do. ITW's proved that you could play your instruments, get a proper recording, and still be truly part of the scene... and they prove it once again on their final offering.(CD)**-Myk**

The K Word "EP" *(LiquiLab, POB 12321, Charlotte, NC 28220)*. The K Word brandishes a skull-thumping aural ability to keep the ears enchanted, active, and on edge. Their songs are an intense, multi-textured cacophony of mechanical Post-Punk angst with a slight, desperate Emo feel to it (vocally). I would imagine that this is exactly the sort of music the *Terminator* cyborg hears inside his head when his computerized emotions are suddenly sensitized. Blip, blip, bleep, bleep, smash, bam, boom!(CD)**-Moser**

Kevin Devine "Make the Clocks Move" *(Triple Crown / Dubin Inc., 331 West 57th St. #472, New York, NY 10019)*. Miracle of '86 frontman Kevin Devine's newest solo offering starts off in my computer, so I get greeted to the multimedia portion of the disc first. The video of "People Are So Fickle" catches both eye and ear with a straightforward songwriting approach that steers clear of over-whining or the need for some Kleenex. The in-studio clip shows some making of the album and a lot of clowning around. The videos are a nice extra to the disc. The music isn't drastically different from other solo acoustic acts, but it's Devine's lyrics that give this release an edge.(CD)**-KevTV**

Kill Hannah "For Never and Ever" *(Atlantic...it's also the name of an ocean)*. This is Kill Hannah's jump to the majors and I must say that I'm disappointed. I didn't remember them sounding so, uh, androgynous on the tracks I'd heard in 2000 or 2001. However, the band has seemingly morphed into a radio-ready 80's-inspired act, above the usual Anglophilia. I'm not criticizing their business decision —as I imagine they'll receive a warm embrace from the mainstream —but hope that Kill Hannah's live show hasn't deteriorated as well.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Kinison *(Fearless, 13772 Goldenwest St #545, Westminster, CA 92683).* I was hoping this album would in someway be a tribute to the now-deceased comedian with the very same surname, but there seems to be nothing funny within this EP. What I hear is Refused and At The Drive-In being mixed up with Taking Back Sunday.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Klimt 1918 "Undressed Momento" *(My Kingdom, POB 31, 84015 Nocera Sup.re (SA) Italy).* Interestingly comparable to old U2, The Smiths and The Cure while Prog-Metal at points. I would like this more if they completed omitted the double-bass drumming, but you can't win them all with long and emotive songs!(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Kudzu Wish "Reverse Hurricane" *(Ernest Jenning, 68 Cheever Pl #2, Brooklyn, NY 11231).* While I am not a big fan of Indie Rock these days or for the hip "Brooklyn" sound that is launching bands like the Yeah, Yeah, Yeahs, Kudzu Wish is a little above all that. They have a hipster sound but there are also elements that remind me of Neil Young, especially the vocal tones at moments. The band does not play the same generic dribble that bands like the White Stripes are playing. They are not just a well-publicized Velvet Underground rip off. I think they actually have more in line with Quicksand and Handsome than they do with their hyper-popular contemporaries. They have a very Post-Hardcore feel to them, but they are not as wimpy as bands like Promise Ring. It's bands like Kudzu Wish that people should be listening to instead of All American Rejects or Juliana Theory.(CD)-**Myk**

The Last Chance *(Dead and Gone, 42 Glover Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 4HN, UK).* Melody infused straight edge hardcore from England. Layered guitar riffs soar above a lashing changeup loaded backbone, as simplistic shout-along hymns of political and social discontent ring true throughout. The charged, often infectious delivery here showcases a staunch adherence to a streamlined but coveted style, and The Last Chance offer a particularly solid take on the youth crew formula on their debut EP. Fans of the above-mentioned approach should certainly take heed.(CD)-**Ramek**

Last Collapse "The Fallen" *(Embers, 909 East Yorba Linda Blvd, Suite H-164, Placentia, CA 92870).* Every once in a while you buy an album that just blows you away. Day in and day out you cannot stop listening to that album. Ten years down the road you'll put that album on and just feel great remembering the first time you listened to it. If you want to find that great album, go out and buy Husker Du's *Flip Your Wig*; a friend recommended it to me, and now I recommend to those who have not yet listened to it. Oh, as far as Last Collapse's *The Fallen* goes, it ain't worth a tit!(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Leadfoot "We Drink For Free" *(Abstract, POB 41084, Philadelphia, PA 19127).* This is pure Southern Rawk. Featuring Karl, formally of COC, this is closer in kin to Skynyrd than to Punk or Stoner Rock. Cars, girls, and booze are the orders of the day on this blazing drunken bar band's plate. At times this reminds me of some of the bands I saw on MTV growing up in the mid '80s, like Uriah Heap. This is a Classic Rock fan's wet dream, a band that they could actually see live, don't look like they are on death's door, and will actually put out new songs every once in a while.(CD)-**Myk**

The Legion "Unseen To Creation" *(Listenable, 556 S. Fair Oaks Ave# 101-111, Pasadena, CA 84101).* This is a little much. The Legion try to pack all the speed and intensity of Marduk and the melodies and intricate guitar work of Dimmu Borgir into every second of this album. The vocals have that classic Black Metal feel to them, very shrill at one point and then s shifting to a full-on guttural growl during the chorus. The members of the band are really talented, especially Emil on drums, but enough is enough. You can't concentrate on one second of this album. You can't appreciate the different aspects of having multiple members because it seems like every member is doing a front page solo all the time. The weird thing with all this is how good the recording is. Black Metal is either warm sounding like Dimmu or Cradle or very cold like Marduk or Mayhem; it usually depends on how melodic or fast you are. But this is a really fast-paced album that still manages to stay warm. This band has a ton of potential, they just need to work on their presentation a bit.(CD)-**Myk**

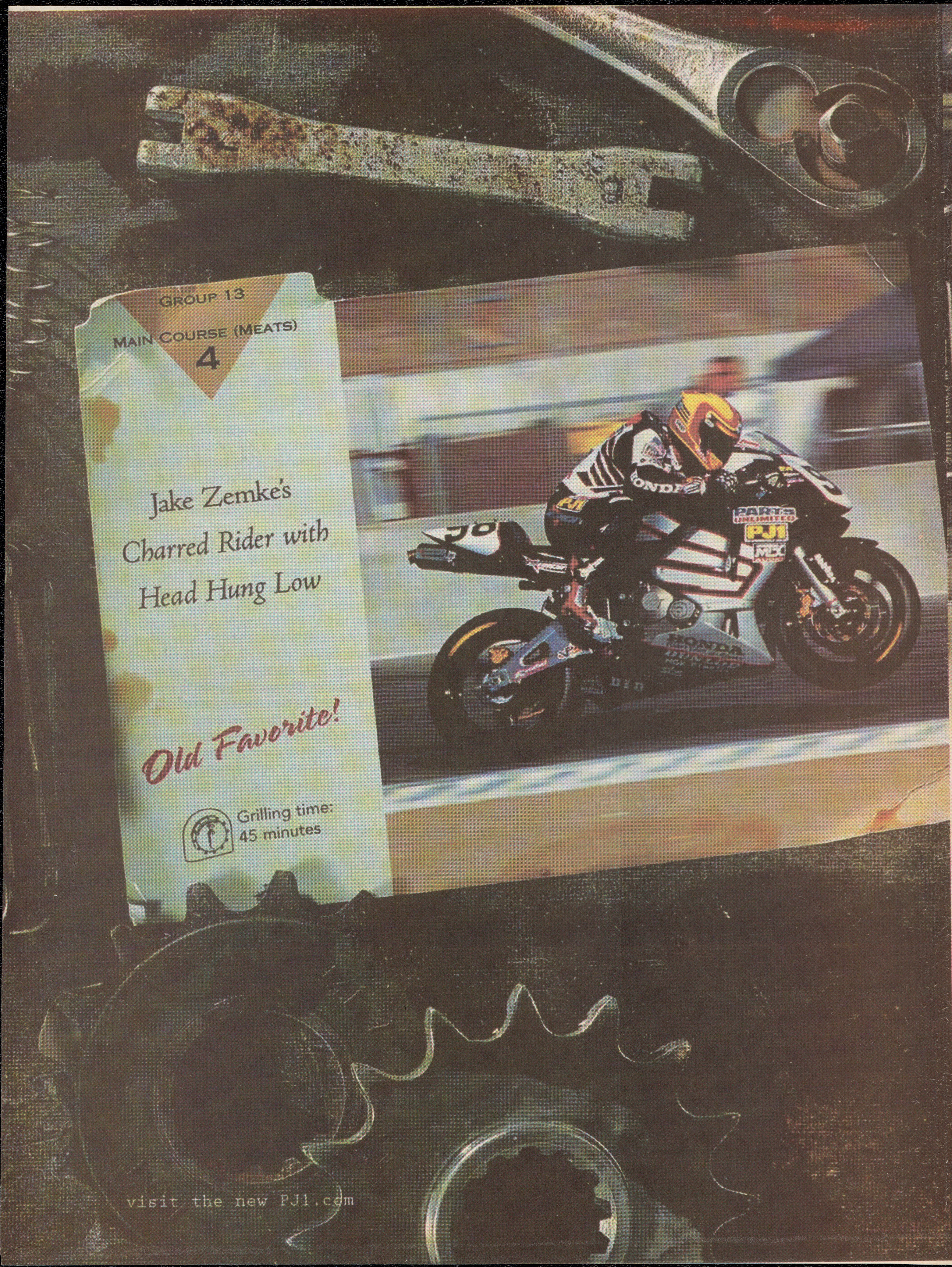
Lime Cell "It's Gonna Get Ugly" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221).* There ain't no denying the dead-on directness of this destructo-cranked CD's title. Lime Cell do it ugly style with all the wildly kickin' vigor of a freshly branded bull set loose in a cramped and cluttered antique shop. The vocalist sounds like his tonsils have been rubbed raw with sandpaper and then doused with several gallons of kerosene. The menacing and maniacal Lime Cell musicians play with such intimidating full-force fury that they make Motorhead sound like *NSync. Yeh, buddy, this here shotgun blast of a disc scared the shit out of me to such a tormentin' degree that I couldn't make it to the outhouse in time. I done stained another pair of overalls! (CD)-**Moser**

Love "The Forever Changes Concert" *(Snapper, www.snappermusic.com).* If you like the 60's band Love, then here's its frontman Arthur Lee leading a full orchestra at Royal Festival Hall through a recent performance of the band's *Forever Changes* album. Also included is a bonus disc with four other Love favorites and assorted interactive bonuses. You should either be thrilled or apathetic about this.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Lower Class Brats "A Class of Our Own" *(Punk Core, POB 916, Middle Island, NY 11953).* Frankly, I was a little pissed when I got this album in the mail. Mainly because of the fact that I went out of **my** way, to search the local as well as the "big" record shops high and low, just to get my filthy hands on this. I finally special ordered it a week after its release date only to find it at my doorstep yesterday. Oh, sweet irony! Anyways, this is the Brats' third full-length , and although it's a tight and well-written record, I have come to appreciate their two earlier releases just a tad bit more. The highlights of this album lie in tracks like, "Golden Boy," "Just Like Clockwork,"(which is significantly slower than its other versions heard on wax and on comps but, still good), and my personal favorite, "Barbie Dolls." Any song that tackles the issues of superficial attitudes matched with fake cosmetic surgery is a winner in my book. If you don't already own, *Rather Be Hated than Ignored* or *The Plot Sickens* I definitely recommend you pick those up before buying this album. For the die-hard fans of LCB pick up this disc, you won't be sorry. Viddy well.(CD)-**Manic**

Manic Hispanic "The Menudo Incident" *(BYO, POB 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067).* As a lovingly packaged re-release of the loco Manic Hispanic vatos' 1992 debut disc, this humorously upbeat CD stands miles above all of the stagnant, generic "Punk Rock" crap being force-fed to the masses today. I mean, how much more original can a band possibly be? Manic Hispanic takes well-known punk anthems from the baddest, snottiest, most belligerent groups of the '70s and '80s (Black Flag, X, The Clash, Sex Pistols, The Damned, The Stooges, etc.), spices 'em up with a jalapeno-burstin' surge of energy, and renders 'em into a frenetic and fiery conglomeration of cerveza-guzzlin' barrio punk with wry Cheech Marin-style vocals. *The Menudo Incident* is the ultimate auditory hot tamale, and you ain't shit, holmes, unless you're low-ridin' the pavement and loudly blastin' this sucker for all the 'hood to hear.(CD)-**Moser**

Mezzanine-C 14 "He Keeps Silent and Sacrifices Himself" *(Break Even, POB 42469, Philadelphia, PA 19101).* Very cool Hardcore that reminds me of early "Emo-core" bands such as Frail, Assfactor 4 and Car Vs. Driver, when Emo wasn't played by a bunch of dudes in nice haircuts, but by men who played fuzzed-out, blaring guitars with vocals screamed until hoarse. That's the feeling I get from this record.


GROUP 13
MAIN COURSE (MEATS)
4
Jake Zemke's
Charred Rider with
Head Hung Low
Old Favorite!
Grilling time:
45 minutes
HONDA
PARTS UNLIMITED
PJ1
DUNLOP
visit the new PJ1.com

GROUP 13

CHARRED RIDER WITH HEAD HUNG LOW

serves 29

INGREDIENTS

1 motorcycle
2 bottles PJ1 Fork Tuner Fork Oil
1 can PJ1 Octane Plus
1 can PJ1 Chain Lube
Babes in bikinis
3 bottles, champagne

1 On a large race track, place 1 motorcycle upright.

2 Cover with PJ1 Fork Tuner Fork Oil, Octane Plus and Chain Lube.

3 Next, turn up heat on track with gradually increasing times every 5 minutes or so.

4 As competitors' blood begins to boil, remove backbones on straightaways.

5 Finally, allow babes in bikinis to smother your champagne-soaked body. Mmmm, delicious!

!

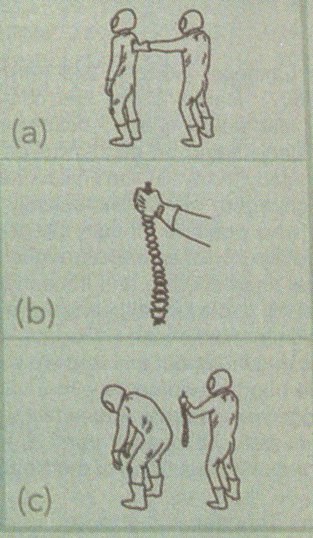
Uh-oh, someone's choking. What should you do?

STEP 1. *Nothing*

STEP 2.

STEP 3.

JAKE'S TIPS & TRICKS:
DEBONING



PJ1

Ingredients for Victory.

Mezzanine-C 14 can't be confined to a particular sound, but every song brings a certain controlled chaos to the table, and the vocal effects (making the singer sound like he's screaming through a megaphone) is a nice touch, akin to that of David Yow of Jesus Lizard or even Sam McPheeters of Born Against. I expect big things from these fellas.(CD)-**McClernon**

Mike Park "For the Love of Music" *(Sub City, POB 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409)*. Maybe it's because there's no Ska on this slab, but this is the best thing I've ever heard from Mike Park, better known for his band Skankin' Pickle and for running Asian Man Records. Acoustic CDs usually get chucked to the back of the line, but Mike has the unique gift of transforming pure emotion into syllables and notes, which had always been difficult to see whilst hiding behind a skankin' guitar riff. Mike touches on love, politics, and racism—perhaps not original topics, but topics that have affected his life personally, and which he reiterates to the listener fluently here. Maybe he's no Paul Westerberg, but it takes courage to lay your heart on the line with nothing more than an acoustic guitar concealing your feelings, so for that I respect him and this record. (CD)-**McClernon**

The Milwaukees "This Is A Stickup" *(Boss Tuneage, POB 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK)*. Reviewing music can sometimes be a bitter poison to swallow. In the case of this particular wretched disc, it's like choking on an ungodly, stomach-churning concoction of arsenic, cyanide, and raw sewage. The Milwaukees drably delve into a long, drawn-out pastiche of mellow, cuddly alt-rock crud with wholesome *American Idol*-style vocals and overly dramatic Pearl Jam-like instrumentation. I assuredly don't mean to be so harshly critical of this release, but it's left such a bad taste in my mouth that I'm now royally pissed off at the entire world. Hey, ma, where's my hatchet?(CD)-**Moser**

Minus "Halldor Laxness" *(Victory, 346 North Justine St., Suite 504, Chicago, IL 60607)*. Damn, Minus has come a long way since the release of their last album, which I believe I got to review as well. I remember this band being an almost full-on Metal act, with just the slightest bit of melody thrown in. On *Halldor Laxness*, the band's sound has drastically changed, with vocals actually sung instead of growled and screamed (who would've thought the guy could actually sing this well?), and there are hooks aplenty throughout the record. The guitars still have a Metal tinge to them and the songs can still be considered heavy, but all in all, this musical change is absolutely for the better. I hear some definite Radiohead influence here mixed with some Deftones action thrown in, but this release is as original as you'll hear these days. The band experiments with a variety of techniques, all of which comes together to create a beautiful wall of sound. As great as this record is overall, it's simply worth it for the single "Romantic Exorcism," my vote for Best Song of the Year.(CD)-**McClernon**

Modey Lemon "Thunder + Lightning" *(Birdman, POB 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)*. Damn nation almighty god, what a magnificently thundering masterpiece this is! The brawny, hard rockin' duo of Modey Lemon stirs up a passionately riveting maelstrom of skin-bruising sounds that's unlike any other these ears have ever heard. It's a stormy, yet inspirational, cacophony of explosive blue-eyed soul, gritty booty-shaking Garage Rock, and powerfully blistering MC5-style boogie. It's all-at-once euphoric, spirited, frenetic, and lively, but it definitely oozes an abrasive, coarse, and dangerous vibe that makes grown men shudder and moan and little girls coyly squirm in their seats. Indeed, *Thunder + Lightning* radiantly bursts with all of the blinding, white-heat energy of a thousand solar flares. The louder it's cranked, the more ecstatic you'll feel. Thankfully, life is sometimes simple like that.(CD)-**Moser**

The Mood Elevator "Married Alive" *(Doppler, POB 5918, Sacramento ,CA 95817)*. Clever, witty and ear-pleasing Power Pop that seems to be a side-project of critically-acclaimed songwriter Brendan Benson. Amongst the best of the batch of CDs I've received this month, but definitely not for the Hardcore or Emo kids.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Moonspell "The Antidote" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. Moonspell was always an afterthought for me. They were always a step behind Lacuna Coil, Theatre of Tragedy or Sentenced as far as I was concerned. With this new album they seem to have embraced their Death Metal roots a little more, so the vocals tend to be heavy a lot more of the time. They also have some long and convoluted intros for just about every track. The songs take too much time to really get going and they lack that true gothic feel that I think the band has desperately tried to convey. While this album is far from bad, I don't think it has done anything to push Moonspell to the very forefront of their scene either. They aren't a good Death Metal band and the songs are gloomy enough to be a Goth band—they sit in the middle so aren't really good at either. Where bands like Samael, Paradise Lost, and Dark Tranquility have managed to tone down and become more Gothic, Moonspell is in limbo. Fans of the earlier albums will not be disappointed, but with the Goth Metal bar raised so high recently they have done nothing to clear the top.(CD)-**Myk**

Murder By Death "Who Will Survive, and What Will Be Left of Them?" *(Eyeball , POB 1653, Peter Stuyvesant Station, New York, NY 10009)*. A band I've heard quite a lot about finds its way into my CD player. The verdict? Quite original; comparing Murder By Death to a specific act or even a genre is difficult. Instead, the songs are more influenced by a vibe or feel that you get while watching some old John Wayne movie. "Devil In Mexico" is a dark and depressing piece that would fit well in an old tavern that has three types of whisky and spittoons. Cello and keyboards help illuminate an almost orchestral quality to the sound that Murder By Death produces; again, more mood than a genre. The album itself is a concept piece about a fictional town that is haunted by everyone's favorite pal, the devil. I'm not too big on concept albums, as I like to listen to the music over the actual literary subject matter, but *Who Will Survive…* **does** have a running theme musically, with songs that are low in volume but loud in creativity and originality. An album by artists, not just musicians creating some racket.(CD)-**KevTV**

Murderer's Row "Menace to Sobriety" *(GSR, Ecrevissestraat 41, 6125 AW Obbicht, the Netherlands)*. With a surprisingly more upbeat sound than expected given the name of the band, Murderer's Row is similar to a project like Roger Miret and the Disasters—players who were in some notable Hardcore bands (Stigmata) taking a new band and embracing melody over muscle. Murderer's Row is all about booze, as the title suggests. Many songs are about the cause of and solution to all of life's problems ("Fightn' and Boozin," "Live By the Drink, Die By the Drink")—hell, even the thank you list includes more bars than bands. To keep it short, if upbeat Hardcore Punk with a bottle of whiskey would do you fine for an evening, this could be your pre-gaming disc.(CD)-**KevTV**

Naer Mataron "River At Dash Scalding´*(Black Lotus, Kon/poleos 72,172 36, Himittos, Athens, Greece)*. This is the band's third album, but the first in the United States, to the best of my knowledge. This is a blazing old school Black Metal album that just happens to have an amazing recording. Bits of Mayhem, Darkthrone, and Bathory immediately come to mind when listening to Naer Mataron. It's extremely fast and atmospheric; the vocals especially have that Quarthon feel to them, and even a bit of the hollow echo that always permeated the Bathory sound. The cymbals are a bit tinny to listen to, but they come across very clear. There are blast beats, and hollow ghostly screams, and the sawblade-sounding guitars that Mayhem made so essential. For those out there looking for a "True" Black Metal band in this day of over blown productions and showmanship, this will definitely fit the bill.(CD)-**Myk**

Naked Aggression "The Gut Wrenching Machine" *(Rodent Popsicle, POB 1143, Allston, MA 02134)*. If you like raw lo-fi production values, fast Punk Rock, and female vocals then this album's for you. The

Charles Bukowski title caught my attention, but the band's story is much more interesting. They recorded this album in its entirety three times, lost their guitarist, lost the recording reels and faced legal action from one of their labels. Personally I don't care much for this album, but I have the feeling some of you readers might dig this.(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Nerf Herder "My EP" *(Honest Don's, POB 192027, San Francisco, CA 94119-2027).* I may not be the most mature guy, but this shit is just downright juvenile. Nerf Herder has been around for nine years and they haven't gotten over the dick and fart jokes stage of their careers. They make Blink 182 seem like Anti-Flag in comparison. Nerf Herder seem to have become a parody in and of themselves—if Weird Al just played Pop Punk, this is what it would sound like. Awful stuff here readers. Oh, and "Love Sandwich" severely pales in comparison to the Mentors' "Sandwich of Love," which is the only song about double penetration that needs to be heard.(CD)-**McClernon**

New Bomb Turks "Switchblade Tongues, Butterknife Brains" *(Gearhead, POB 421219, San Francisco, CA 94142).* Very witty title. In the early years of New Bomb Turks, the band could do no wrong. Their first couple of albums were practically flawless, provoking Tim Yohannan to call the Turks "the greatest punk band of the '90's." I had stopped listening to them during their Epitaph stint, simply because I didn't feel the material was up to par with what I expected from the band. Well this new full-length—basically an odds and sods collection made up primarily of an unreleased EP for Epitaph and one for the defunct label Glazed, as well as a few comp. tracks—is fucking badass! The band seems to remember how to flat-out rock out with their balls to the wall once again, and the cool thing about this release is when you listen to it all the way through, it's so cohesive that it basically sounds like a new full-length. Don't be swayed by the rough patch the band had the last couple of years, this release won't disappoint you.(CD)-**McClernon**

Nightrage "Sweet Vengeance" *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250).* This is Swedish Death Metal when you don't polish it all up. This band also features the members to make said music: Tomas from ATG, Per Jensen from the Haunted, Gus G of Dream Evil, Tom of Evergrey and Marios from Exhumation make up the majority of this in your face Metal attack. Tomas' vocals are unmistakable, but they sound like they did in ATG—he isn't trying to fit into an existing band, he's doing his own thing here. Jensen's drums are—fuck, he's in the Haunted, like I need to explain. Gus' guitars are tight and full sounding, but they don't play as much of the melodic classic sound which is so prominent today. Hell, the album was recorded at Studio Fredman and the artwork is done by Dark Tranquility's Niklas Sundin. This is like a Gothenburg All-Star game. This is a real good look back at the sound of a scene that grew exponentially and got a bit lost. For fans of ATG, early Crown of Thorns, or Eucharist.(CD)-**Myk**

Orange Island *(Triple Crown, 331 West 57th St. #472, New York, NY 10019).* Nice. Nothing beats getting a CD that I know nothing about, and as the first song progresses, I gradually turn up the volume. The opener, "Four Letter Tattoos and White Flags," opens with a slow part that kicks into Rock overdrive. For musical comparisons, this really reminds me of Hot Rod Circuit on their last album *Sorry About Tomorrow.* Uplifting Rock music for the Rock fan—don't throw that damn "e" word in here. As much as I like seeing lyrics accompany a release, Orange Island took an interesting approach and made a thank you list for each song, writing what inspired each tale and title. Cool idea, and considering the lyrics are sung, you don't need the printed words to make sure your interpretation is correct. If this band can get on a couple good tours Orange Island could be on the move.(CD)-**KevTV**

Paul Westerberg "Come Feel Me Tremble" *(Vagrant, 2118 Wilshire Blvd PMB 361, Santa Monica, CA 90403).* Following the tremendous comeback album that *Stereo* was, fans must have been expecting more of the introspective ballads that made up the bulk of that album to show up on *Come Feel Me Tremble*, but if we have learned anything from Paul Westerberg, it's don`t expect anything. Instead of acoustic ballads we are treated to a record that fucking rocks much like the previous Grandpaboy (Westerberg's Garage Rock moniker) release. And while The Replacements this is not, songs like "Making Me Go" and "My Daydream" with the trademark loner lyrics are more than sufficient. Westerberg, as always, is the one songwriter who can put into words what we can never find the strength to say, and he displays this best in such powerful songs as "What A Day (For A Night)" and the acoustic tearjerking of "Meet Me Down the Alley." With *Come Feel Me Tremble*, a new Grandpaboy release on Fat Possum and the hush-hush *Folker* due out in January, there will be plenty of Westerberg to shake a stick at.(CD)-**Andriani**

Penance "Spirtualnatural" *(Martyr,POB 42323, Pittsburgh, PA 15203).* Penance is what I would refer to as Retro Doom. They don't sound like most of the bands out there at the moment who are about nothing but Stoner Rock. Penance plays some of the closest Doom Rock comparable to classic Black Sabbath you will hear anywhere. Groove laden solos rip over tuned down bass riffs and a steady precise drum beat. The guitars have that "Orange" sound to them and some of the song structures are pure Sabbath tribute. The vocalist sounds like a early '80's Metal singer. All kinds of range and note fluctuations make the vocals tracks very interesting and diverse. Fans of Sabbath, Zakk Wylde (solo, not with Ozzy), and Pentagram should really take note.(CD)-**Myk**

Pennywise "From the Ashes" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026).*This isn't *Unknown Road*, but this is proof as to why this band has been around for years and years and continues to get strong reactions from their fans when other bands have their fanbase move on to the next big thing. Anthem-laden political Punk Rock, with a tone questioning our government and its practices make up the majority of this album. There is no poor song here, but there are a couple that stand out for sure. "God Save the USA" is among the better tracks, as is "Holiday In the Sun," proving that Pennywise is still a relevant entity. It's hard for long-time bands to still be in touch with their fanbase, especially one that re-invents itself every couple of years as the kids grow up and leave the scene. The first pressing of this album features a DVD included for free, which features some backstage stuff, interviews and live footage. You can't ask for more than consistency, and Pennywise consistently puts out damn good records.(CD)-**Myk**

Pipedown "Mental Weaponry" *(A-F, POB 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213).* I'm not sure what to make of this... The band's sound teeters between Hardcore and Emo, immediately bringing to mind AFI and Thrice, only better, but lyrically they come off as an Anti Flag Jr., which I fucking abhor. I think the Punk Rock kids will eat this up, but as for me, the last thing I need to hear is another bunch of white-bread middle class kids singing about hugging a tree, saving the rain forest, or how our country sucks. Like, totally.(CD)-**McClernon**

Pipedown "Mental Weaponry" *(A-F , POB 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213).* First off, the art and layout for this disc is fantastic; Jon Wayshak's illustrations are very well done. It's reasons like this that people are sometimes enticed to actually buy a CD. Besides the lyrics, the names of well-known thinkers and intellectuals are inside the booklet with a short statement about their influence on society. With a great amount of effort and time put into the artwork, the music thankfully matches. Pipedown is very West Coast Hardcore with a lot of similarities to AFI. With an intro track, Pipedown then launch into "Losing the Sum," an incredibly heavy and aggressive cut with some great stop-start riffing. "Knowledge the Weapon" tends to play like a lost song from the *Black Sails in the Sunset* CD, but AFI comparisons and similarities aside, Pipedown **do** write concise and tight songs that display talent and passion, two traits lacking in many bands. I'd definitely like to check this band out live—hopefully I'll have that chance. For now, this CD will have to suffice.(CD)-**KevTV**

The Planet The "Physical Angel" *(54 40 or Fight, POB 1601, Acme, MI 49610-1601)*. Fun. Bizarre. Dancy. Artsy. Genius. Those are a few of the choice buzz words that could describe the spastic toybox of sound that is The Planet The. This trio plays an incredibly unique brand of Prog Rock mixed with No Wave deconstructionalism and electro-tinged dance that is as experimental as it is catchy. The Planet The easily can be compared to bands like Ex-Models and Brainiac, as well as early '80's avant disco pioneers Liquid Liquid. Conventional song structures are hardly present on *Physical Angel*, as the songs shape themselves into a sonic clusterfuck, and by the end of each track you are in awe of the beautiful chaos that has ensued. *Physical Angel* is an absolute masterpiece and needs to be praised in all of its twisted glory.(CD)-**Andriani**

Plus/Minus "You Are Here" (*Teenbeat, www.teenbeat.net)* Low-key Synth-Alt-Pop. Okay, okay, so the opening descriptive is a bit of a misnomer, this is not your standard synthpop. They're making good use of some primitive synthesizer on three of the tracks here, but that quickly gives way to a standard Alt-Pop disc, a la the Damned. Several of my reviewer peers have made a comparison to Postal Service, but I can't do that because I never heard of Postal Service. There is one song on here that is an attempt at hauntingly twisted, but they got it all wrong, the lyrics don't match the tone of the music.(CD)-**Grego**

Pseudosix "Days of Delay" *(54 or 40 Fight, POB 1601, Acme, MI 49610)*. Hailing from Portland, this trio led by the brilliant songwriting of Tim Perry play a brooding band of American Folk music that transforms itself at times into rhythmic guitar-based Indie Rock along the lines of Rex. Pseudosix has such a confident sense of musicianship that its subtle layers of guitar and vocal sounds are pulled together in a way that seems to be minimalist, but in truth there is a lot going on in each song, if one listens closely. Imagine if Jeff Tweedy played Cat Power songs. This is one of the best records that most people won't hear this year.(CD)-**Andriani**

The Purrs *(Garage Pop, POB 88003, Rochester, NY 14618)*. I've always been a sucker for chicks that play guitar... call me crazy. In fact it's this band's three pairs of tits that keeps me from fuckin' burying this album. But seriously, The Purrs deliver an eight-song record that will grow on you, if you give it time. It's all about acquired taste. Here's an example: as a kid, I used to get kicked in the nuts a lot by members of the soccer team. Years later, I had grown partial to having sleazy women with high heels step on my testicles. So you see, with repeated listening to this record, you too will feel like a pair of pumps are crushing your nuts. Complete with shana-nas and woah-woah-woahs, this album will either allow you to appreciate it for its pop-sensibility and catchy lyrical content, or it'll make you want to stick your dick in a toaster. Luckily for me, I take *lithium* so I don't fall into either category.(CD)-**Manic**

The Quick Fix Kills "Saint Something" *(My Pal God, 47 Hardy Dr., Princeton, NJ 08540)*. This sounds to me like old At The Drive-In being merged with old Piebald, which is neither appealing nor flattering —I didn't appreciate the work of those two groups until their most recent full-lengths. However, this band has an incredible sense of humor, as shown with song titles like "3/4 Romance," "Suicide Is So '90's" and "My Scabs Look Like Art." But I would bet that this is an energetic and exciting five-piece in concert...(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Quill "Hooray! It's A Death Trip" *(SPV, 1976 East High St, Pottstown, PA 19464)*. This band is just incredible. This is their second album, and it's more diverse than the first, which was one of my biggest surprises of last year as it was. Magnus's vocals are a dead ringer for Chris Cornell of Soundgarden and the Stoner, Doom, Classic Rock feel of the band is the perfect vehicle of his amazing range. This is the kind of release that the Sub Pop guys would have cum over in the early days: grooving Rock with booming vocals parts and John Bonham-like drum beats burst from all of the 11 tracks here. Bands like The Quill only come around every so often, and it is more rare when they improve upon themselves. I don't think they can do any wrong.(CD)-**Myk**

Rain Paint "Nihil Nisi Mors" *(My Kingdom, POB 31, 84015 Nocera Sup.re (SA) Italy)*. The liner notes included call Rain Paint a "delirant circus of Gothic Metal, Dark Wave, Doom, Progressive Rock and Melodic Death," which is quite accurate. Description and theatrics aside, it truly is better than 99% of the Euro-Metal I usually have to review for *UTV*.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Ranking Joe "Zion High" *(Blood and Fire Limited, Ducie House, 37 Ducie St., Manchester, M1 2JW, England)*. Rasta Dancehall. Whichever wave it was in 1980, this is a fine example of the hypnotic Reggae the Clash were influenced by, and I'm sure we all know what **that** means. Reissue.(CD)-**Grego**

The Ravonettes "Chain Gang of Love" *(Columbia, 550 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022)*. The Ravonettes are a Garage Rock band that has such a catchy '60's Rock sound to them. Their soundtrack-esque music coincides nicely with their movie poster-esque CD insert. The lyrics are simple and mostly about love; very upbeat and feel-good type stuff. Definitely a keeper.(CD)-**Cain**

Reno Divorce "You're Only Making It Worse" *(Boss Tuneage, POB 74, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WB, UK)*. Like a lot of Punk / Rock n' Roll enthusiasts, I've been wallowing in a doleful state of gut-wrenching misery the past few years while mourning the break-up of the incomparable Ramones and the recent untimely deaths of Joey and Dee Dee. I had my serious doubts that Rock n' Roll in general and Punk in particular would ever again possess the burning passion and energetic zeal that the Ramones brought to the music world. But, by golly gosh, Reno Divorce is putting the ballsy, swaggering oomph back into punk rock with the crunchy, bad-ass bravado of *You're Only Making It Worse*. Although the sonically smokin' Reno boys have more in common musically with Social Distortion (plus a snotty smidgen of The Chiefs thrown in for good measure), they definitely rage with the same lively, uncontainable fire that the brudda Ramones wreaked upon the planet during their heyday in the 1970s. Please note that I am in no way comparing the two bands music-wise, because they are as broadly different as night and day. I'm just drawing a figurative relation between both groups' neck-snapping energetic spark. It's a given that Reno Divorce's songs are catchy and captivating, a rapid-fire bombardment of auditory detonations that roars with all of the thunderous, bone-fracturing fury of two planets suddenly colliding. But Reno Divorce gets down in the dirt and shovels out a manly, grunting maelstrom of gritty and greasy Rock n' Roll debauchery drenched in sweat and booze and thickly slathered in a rugged coat of dirty-dealin', jailhouse guitar rhythms and the insolent "live fast, die young" ethos. It's a surly, burly, lean, and mean musical journey into the wild and decadent side of life where tattoos, immoral broads, and working-class, trailer park trashiness reign supreme. Indeed, Reno Divorce is exactly the type of band that appeals to the night-crawling outlaw element within us all, so I suggest you get liquored up and wild-eyed and blast this sizzlin', sin-fueled disc until the tired uncertainty of dawn rears its ugly head.(CD)-**Moser**

The Repercussions "Demo CD" *(No info available)*.It's not that often I get excited about a new local band; maybe I'm a cynical fuck, but whatever. Anyway, I had the good fortune to play a show with these fine young lads and they blew me away. If you're a fan of The Gories, The Gun Club, any *Back From the Grave* compilation or just some good fucking Garage Rock and in the Long Island area, then check these guys out and ask the singer for a CD. And be nice enough to at least offer him a beer for it!(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Repulsion "Horrified" *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd., Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. This is a two disc compilation of everything Repulsion ever released, plus a whole shitload more. Disc one is the *Horrified* album, and it is a classic example of classic Thrash/Crossover. Fans of Cryptic Slaughter, DRI, and the Crumbsuckers will eat this up. The recording is really crisp and in your face, I'm not sure if it has been remastered or not. The second disc features two Repulsion demos, the Genocide demo (pre-Repulsion), a Genocide radio demo, a live show and a Genocide rehearsal. This disc features 30 tracks from the band's history and a good amount of them are otherwise unreleased. This is classic stuff, and it doesn't get any better than getting it all in one package. By the way, the liner notes in this are amazing, and you find out cool bits like members of Genocide went on to be in Death.(CD)-**Myk**

The Resistoleros "Rockn N' Roll Napalm" *(Steel Cage, POB 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125)*. Kick ass! The Resistoleros crank it out low-down, mean, and nasty like a bunch of filthy, sleaze-lovin' dregs of society flyin' high on booze, smack, and cheap, gutter-crawlin' sex appeal. Theirs is the sordid, unsavory sound of pure, undiluted Rock n' Roll at its most primal, reckless, and heinous with a frenzied, Bowery-style blitz and plenty of ballsy, gut-slashing attitude. The vocals are defiantly delivered with a gruff and belligerent air of devil-may-care surliness. The smokin', high-octane guitar leads simmer in a thick and heavy bombardment of swaggering, drug-addled riffs ala the Dead Boys, Electric Frankenstein, and Dead Man's Choir. The bass and drums roar like a caterwauling, graffiti-covered subway train violently rumbling throughout the seedy, rat-infested underbelly of New York City. No doubt about it, The Resistoleros rock it hard, play it dirty, and shake it loose! If Sid Vicious, Johnny Thunders, and Stiv Bators were alive today, they'd be feverishly shootin' up a vein-blistering supply of grade "A" street heroin to the decadent, thundering noise destruction of *Rock N' Roll Napalm*.(CD)-**Moser**

Ringworm "The Promise" *(Deathwish Inc., 10 Lothrop St., Beverly, MA 01915)*. This seminal record from Cleveland's most formidable and punishing outfit has been resurrected once more. Lavishly packaged, and generously endowed with a collection of outtakes and demo material, this revised edition of Ringworm's *The Promise* should be considered absolutely essential for those with an appreciation for stripped down grime-encased Hardcore. Skewed, Metal-laced dirges coat this outfit's brand of fragmented NYHC-esque mayhem while an impossibly vile lyrical slant illustrative of absolute loathing and bleak resignation is pervasive throughout. Only from the desolate bowels of the rust belt could so utterly dark and gloom ridden an escapade have been born. This record influenced countless legions of like-minded misanthropes to voice their hatred for mankind through the medium of Hardcore. Indispensable.(CD)-**Ramek**

Ringworm "The Promise" *(Deathwish Inc., 10 Lothrop St, Beverly, MA 01915)*. This is a re-issue of one of my favorite Cleveland bands that isn't Integrity. The CD features the *The Promise* CD plus the band's 1990/1991 demo as bonus tracks. The one thing this doesn't have is the Angry Samoans cover that was on the original CD release on Incision Records. The band plays a cross between what we now know as Clevo-core and Slapshot. The vocals sound very similar to Choke, something that does not necessarily happen on the band's newer albums. The packaging on this is excellent, and has a far more Satanic feel than the original artwork did. This new version also has excellent liner notes and the digipack is very impressive. A must own album already, but they really went all out with the packaging and presentation to make it even more appealing.(CD)-**Myk**

Roy "Tacomatose" *(Initial, POB 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. This is a five song EP of singer songwriter style stuff that sounds like it is derived fro ma Post-Punk background. Most of the guitar playing throughout the disc is acoustic and the vocals sound like they came from a Fat Possum recording artist. To some degree they remind me of the Jade Tree act Cap N Jazz, but they also remind me of James Taylor so that isn't saying much. Releases like this do absolutely nothing for me. For a song to be acoustic and sad, it has to be truly moving and not so arty. This is a little too "backyard porch" sounding to really get under my skin. I'd rather listen to Classical.(CD)-**Myk**

Roy "Tacomatose" *(Initial, POB 17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. Finally, an indie band that doesn't have to rely on fashion gimmicks to sell records. The music on this five-song E.P shifts from sludgy Mudhoney riffs to very poppy, then to mellow. "The Bolivian Army Lays Siege to Seattle" is one of the better numbers on the album, obviously talking about the drug problem in that area. This is a good pick for fans of the Pixies, Dinosaur Jr., or those of you who are still into music from Seattle. Remember there is nothing wrong with still liking music from Seattle. Unless of course you like Candlebox... in that case you should stab your own ears with an ice pick .(CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Roy "The Red EP" *(Crash, 1122 East Pike St. PMB 1037, Seattle, WA 98122)*. Roy is an uninteresting band that has three different color-titled EPs on three different labels. I have the pleasure of reviewing the second of the three, *The Red EP*. This is an immature sounding indie band with simple beats and boring hooks. There's even an acoustic, emotional track about breaking edge entitled "The Sell-Out Blues" to boot. Overall, it's a simple-sounding record with not a lot to offer.(CD)-**Cain**

Ruth's Hat "The Hitchhiker's Guide to Rock and Roll" *(Fast Music, POB 206512, New Haven, CT 06520)*. This CD has an old school Rock n' Roll feel, complete with harmonies, a distinctive beat, and a tempo lifted from the founding days of Rock n' Roll. The music isn't amazing but it outshines the lyrics. Weak band name, less than stellar music. This is Rock that Marty McFly might have listened to while drinking a milk...chocolate.(CD)-**KevTV**

The Sabians "Shiver" *(The Music Cartel, POB 629, Port Washington, NY 11050)*. Somewhat similar to Tool in their structuring and execution of a song, The Sabians rock with a more melodic, earthy feel that sometimes reminds me of the transcendental epic splendor of Jane's Addiction and Smashing Pumpkins, too. Intricately divine music like this is delicately carved from the soul with the utmost of precision and dedication. It provocatively moves a person both in body and spirit, and it causes one to ponder the external forces and internal struggles of light and darkness, good and evil, and life and death. In this tumultuous era of careless war mongering and heated political upheaval, The Sabians are a ray of hope, inspiration, and unfaltering strength, and *Shiver* is their brightly bellowing call to arms. Damn, I think I've done got all spiritual and enlightened thanks to the sacred sonic testaments calmly rumbling throughout this downright perfect collection of auditory delights.(CD)-**Moser**

Salty the Pocketknife *(Sonance , www.sonancerecords.com)*. In looking for an address for the label from their website, I look over the names of the players; Rosebud: vocals; Scott Ireland: guitar; Evan Stone: drums; Dustin Diamond : bass... WHAT?!?! Dustin Diamond? A man who once sported a pineapple bra in the Max? A man who regretfully had a robot named after me? A man with a lust for Lisa Turtle and is familiar with being stuffed inside a locker? A man who has one of the best cameos ever, with his cameo in the movie *Made*? Wow, wow, and wow. With an awful name for a band but a man's man holding down bass duties, who knows what the hell to expect? I'll tell you —not much. High, Geddy Lee-like vocals with some odd and meandering lyrics and music that sounds like bad attempts at fret exercises, Mr. Diamond's musical endeavor should land him in detention with Miss Bliss. Maybe when they play live Dustin dances and does "The Sprain."(CD)-**KevTV**

Scraps and Heart Attacks "Still Sick" *(Triple Crown, 331 W. 57th St., PMB 472, New York, NY 10019)*. Fuck yeah! This is what I need—real Hardcore that comes at you full-throttle, seething with venom and pure anger. Formerly known as The Heist, Long Island's Scraps and Heart Attacks unleash quite a debut full-length on us, with 11 songs of DC-inspired, early '80's Hardcore that is light on the Metal and heavy on the speed. The musicianship is not always the tightest (in fact, a couple of parts are downright sloppy) and the lyrics aren't always thought-provoking, but that's part of this record's charm, as well as what makes it so important in a scene that sometimes takes itself entirely too seriously. I hope for the best for these kids.(CD)**-McClernon**

Selfmademan "The Daylight Robbery" *(Small Man, POB 352, RPO Corydon Ave., Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada).* Selfmademan is a four-piece Hot Water Music-inspired, Canadian Punk band. Their lyrics raise political and social awareness through emotionally-charged vocals. This is honestly one of the best younger Punk bands I've heard in a while, mostly because they aren't whiney or annoying in any way. It's definitely a good thing to hear from an upcoming band that outruns the trend of Emo and self-absorption in music nowadays. I hope to hear more of Selfmademan in the future.(CD)**-Cain**

Sepultura "Roorback" *(SPV, POB 203, 1917 West 4th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6J 1M7).* Every album that Sepultura has released since Max left the band has been an improvement on the album that came before. *Roorback* is no exception to this rule. The thing is, that the first effort just sucked, the last one was a decent album, and this is better than decent. But none of them live up to the legendary band of old. That in mind, this album has gone in a far more Hardcore direction. Derek's vocals are extremely improved. The riffs are defining Sepultura sounding power chords, but they are a little rehashed from *Chaos AD* era tracks. More indication of the band's desire to take the Hardcore scene is the artwork by Derek Hess. After all, he is a Hardcore legend in the field of artwork. Had this been the first album the band recorded with Derrick on vocals, I really don't think that there would have been such a mass exodus of fans from the Sepultura camp. But to be honest, the better the record is , the more it makes me want Max to return. The band has done a good job of picking themselves up by the bootstraps and continuing on. They may never be the juggernaut of old, but if they continue to put out albums likes this, they will do some serious repair to their damaged moniker.(CD)**-Myk**

The Shins "Chutes Too Narrow" *(SubPop, POB 20367, Seattle, WA 98102).* Somehow they did it. It seemed a nearly impossible task to match the *Pet Sounds*-esque reverberated brilliance of 2001's *Oh, Inverted World*, but against the odds, James Mercer and the rest of The Shins did just that with their latest, *Chutes Too Narrow*. The melodies are just as memorable, the production has been beefed up, and the packaging is top notch in its die cut fold out children's book style. In a time where it seems as if American guitar-based pop music is nonexistent, The Shins' tuneful songs are a pleasant change from the norm. *Chutes Too Narrow* contains as many if not more instant hits than their previous album.(CD)**-Andriani**

Shrine of Scars"Violence Is the Answer" *(Disfigured, 630 Hemlock Ave., Milbrae, CA 94030).* A mostly above par Death/Thrash outing that incorporates elements of blastbeat-driven Grindcore and a melodic undercurrent, as well. Head and shoulders above the standard chugging Metalcore fare so tragically prominent today, Shrine of Scars seem intent on harkening back to a more innovative and notable period for Metal, infusing aspects of both seminal '80s crossover and formative Earache-era cacophony into their relentless tempo-shifting barrage.(CD)**-Ramek**

The Sick Lipstick "Sting Sting Sting" *(Tiger Style, 401 Broadway, 26th Fl, New York, NY 10013-3005).* If Yoko Ono huffed a tank full of helium and then spastically fronted a quirky, speed-driven supergroup comprised of Romeo Void, The B-52s, Christian Death, and Devo, then they'd call themselves The Sick Lipstick and euphorically create a manic musical commotion all their own. With such zany, offbeat song titles as "Thigh Master I'm Your Master," "Zombie Cookie," "Knit-Stitch/Crotch Itch," and "Get Up! Catch Up," you know your ears are in for an overwhelmingly good time. *Sting Sting Sting* is a colorful, undeniably unique release that makes my insides spasm in an uncontrollable fit of flailing joy.(CD)**-Moser**

The Skulls "The Golden Age of Piracy" *(Dr. Strange, POB 1058, Alta Loma, CA 91701).* So, The Skulls have been around since the first wave of the LA Punk Rock scene except now the only original member is Billy Bones (really clever last name). This album is a hair better than any generic Punk Rock album. "Can Punk Rock Pay the Bills?" seems to be the only stand out here. Kids do yourself a favor and spend your money on a Clash album instead.(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

Smogtown "Tales of Gross Pollution" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).* During their all-too-brief recording career, Smogtown kept my ears wildly wiggling, my heart rapidly palpitating, and my feet furiously stomping. In the entire eight years of their existence, Smogtown only released two full-length discs, but both of those CDs are the blazing sonic embodiment of angry Punk Rock belligerence in all of its explosive, conflagrant glory. Smogtown spat, spewed, and splattered an enraged, anarchic array of barbaric, slamming, pogo-bouncing songs that venomously epitomized snarling, *Suburbia*-style, old school Punk in the nihilistic, California-bred tradition of Agent Orange, Adolescents, and Circle Jerks. This 19-track collection of volatile, high-energy demos from 1995 and '96 perfectly captures all of the angst, bitterness, and socially caustic outrage that Smogtown so skillfully put to music. It's proof positive that Punk is much more than a mall-friendly, MTV-generated fashion statement. In the hands of Smogtown, punk is a dangerous, sneering form of musical expression backed with a big, ballsy blast of snotty, incorrigible attitude. I suddenly feel compelled to purchase a plain white tee shirt and scrawl the following epitaph across the front chest area in black magic marker, "There's No Future Without Smogtown!". Indeed, everything else is half-assed and lame, and generally just sucks big time.(CD)**-Moser**

The Spotlight Syndicate "Forget The Static Past" *(Substandard, POB 310, Berkeley, CA 94701).* This is along the lines of what Hot Hot Heat used to sound like. Minimalistic yet futuristic-sounding without using computers; no guitars, just a Casio-esque keyboard, bass and drums under the vocals. At the very least it's interesting, but the hooks aren't quite there.(CD)**-Paltrowitz**

Speedealer "Burned Alive" *(Radical , 77 Bleecker St., Suite C2-21, New York, NY 10012).* Do you like your Rock n' Roll hammered out hard and heavy, trailer trash-style, and infused with a maximum overload of unrelenting fury? Well, if you do, then Speedealer is just the band to torment your ears, mutilate your innards, and twist your spine in a knot with their maniacal, turbo-charged musical wrath. In the late 1990s, I witnessed the full-force, tornado-like Rock n' Roll savagery of these wild-eyed Lone Star hellions (when they were calling themselves REO Speedealer) live and in person at a seedy, drug-infested dive (The Ocean Club) here in Longview, Texas. And lordy mercy, my hearing has been permanently, irreparably damaged ever since. This particular thunderously clamoring release was recorded live at CBGB July 4, 2003, and, buddy, I'm here to tell you that Speedealer hasn't lost one iota of their abrasive energetic flair during the resulting few years after my initial eardrum-splattering introduction to them. The screaming, turpentine-scoured vocalist still sounds exactly like a demented, snaggle-toothed hillbilly who just embarked on a flesh-eating, murderous rampage, and the aggressive, fuel-injected instrumentation ferociously packs all of the metal-crushing wallop of a 4x4 monster truck wildly bouncing across the tops of a stadium-length line of Detroit-built automobiles. Whoo-doggy, I pity the poor, unfortunate saps who neglect to wear earplugs when listening to this manic maelstrom of mean and surly Rock n' Roll fitfulness.(CD)**-Moser**

Sticks & Stones "The Strife and Times" *(Chunksaah, POB 974, New Brunswick, NJ 08903).* Kudos to Chunksaah for releasing this 41-track anthology of one of the most underrated bands to come out of the East Coast in sometime. Sticks & Stones formed in the late '80's, and up to their demise in 1995, the band never really got their due. Perhaps it was due to their timing (the late '80's/early '90's weren't really an ideal period for melody in New York/New Jersey Punk and Hardcore), weak distribution, and somewhat uneven recordings, S & S stayed mostly a hidden gem to much of this country, despite a number of national tours and albums. This double CD set is the culmination of everything they ever recorded, from the raw, early Hardcore-tinged material that was demo-ed to the later melodic Punk with pop hooks that the band would eventually become known for. This anthology reads like a Punk Rock history lesson, complete with tour stories and rules for playing in a touring Rock n' Roll band, all packaged exceptionally. If you missed out on this band the first time around, you're not alone, but don't make the same mistake twice.(CD)-**McClernon**

Street Dogs "Savin Hill" *(Crosscheck, POB 39439, Los Angeles, CA 90039).* Here's a former Dropkick Murphys frontman and song titles like "Modern Day Labor Anthem" and "Fighter"—take a guess as to what this sounds like and who will be into it!(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Strokes "Room on Fire" *(RCA, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036-4098).* Now that the hype has died down and Rock music has been returned to its grave by the mainstream The Strokes are back from one hit wonder land. On their latest, *Room On Fire*, they have made a really enjoyable record loaded with 11 brand new simplistic, catchy P op Rock songs that sounds like a cross between a geekier Stone Roses and The Cars first album, while at times coming of like a less lo-fi Guided By Voices. Critics and haters will be surprised as *Room On Fire* doesn't fall on its face as might have been expected, while fans will be thrilled with such potential hits as "What Ever Happened" and "I Can't Win." Surprisingly, their one hit has been followed up with an album of enjoyable Slacker Rock jingles.(CD)-**Andriani**

Strychnine "Oakland Stadtmusikanten 'Live' In Bremen Germany" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221).* Man oh man, Strychnine shreds my eardrums raw and then bleeds them dry with this brutally loud and cacophonously corrosive disc! It's a live, abrasive, and energetically explosive outburst of old school Hardcore that gets more menacing and manic by the minute. Heavily charged with a skull-mangling flurry of growling, napalm-scorched vocals and a whirling out-of-control blitzkrieg of noisy, uncontrolled instrumentation, Strychnine sends me into a turbulent moshing frenzy with my arms and legs wildly flailing in a sweat-tossing fit of rampaging excitability. Whew, I'm out of breath!(CD)-**Moser**

Sun Kil Moon "Ghosts of the Great Highway" *(Jetset, 67 Vestry St., New York, NY 10013).* Red House Painters frontman Mark Kozelek has a new project that is laid-back yet poppy. Track one is titled "Glenn Tipton" ...yes, it is partially about the Judas Priest guitarist. For fans of Neil Young, Wilco and Kozelek's other work.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Ted Leo/Pharmacists "Tell Balgeary, Balgury Is Dead" *(Lookout, 3264 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703).* With the exception of the opening title track, all of the tracks on this album (minus the two intended to be music-less fillers) are just Ted and his electric guitar. Mr. Leo is a very talented artist and is definitely for fans of early Elvis Costello. His lyrics are always thoughtful, his melodies are often original and his vocals are charismatic, but in guitar-vocal form, these songs sound like demos. A little more gloss and I would then recommend this CD for all.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Teenage Fanclub "Four Thousand, Seven Hundred and Sixty-Six Seconds: A Short Cut to Teenage Fanclub" *(Jetset, 67 Vestry Street, New York, NY 10013).* In the early '90's, Scotland's Teenage Fanclub exploded onto the scene with their classic Power-Pop record, *Bandwagonesque*, which unleashed "The Concept," the song that made them a household name here in the States. For a variety of reasons, following *Bandwagonesque,* the band faded into relative obscurity, still garnering positive critic's reviews, but lacking a real push from a US label seriously hurt their chances at retaining their world-wide acclaim. Now with this "best of"-type collection released on a reputable US label, the world will hopefully again open its eyes to one of the best Power Pop bands in over a decade. This comp collects all their hits and as well as some of their more obscure gems, but to this reviewer, they all had the chance to be hits.(CD)-**McClernon**

Ten Benson "Benson Burner" *(Jetset, 67 Vestry St., New York, NY 10013).* Ten Benson sounds uncannily like an incorrigible, loose-rockin' amalgam of AC/DC's thunderously colossal booze-blues noise crossed with the Butthole Surfers' primal, terror-inducing sonic insanity complete with demonic, megaphone-filtered vocals. It's crazy-eyed, electronic-tinged Rock n' Roll with a psychotic, meaty thrust that brings out the fire-breathing beast in me and makes me wanna fiercely bang my head with the devil and a pack of wild dogs. Acid freaks, spastic nutcases, and certifiable loons are urged to immediately step this way. Let the wild and demented tunes of Ten Benson electrify your lobes and take you to an alternate state of mind.(CD)-**Moser**

Those Unknown *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221).* Thanks go out to TKO for taking it upon themselves to re-issue one of my favorite modern-day Street Punk records. Before there was the Dropkick Murphys, Workin' Stiffs, or the Beltones, there was Those Unknown. In fact, the DKM's have on more than one occasion declared that if not for this record, there would probably be no "Do or Die." Anyway, what you have here are fourteen working class punk anthems (including two unreleased tracks) that have stayed dormant for far too long. The only negative aspect to the whole record is the recording itself, with guitars far too low and a shoddy mastering job, which unfortunately takes a little away from the songs. Otherwise flawless. (CD)-**McClernon**

Those Unknown *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221).* Boisterously loud kudos to the fine folks at TKO! They've taken Those Unknown's 1995 debut disc (which has been out-of-print for the past several years) and doctored it up with two flesh-bruising bonus cuts. It's one hell of a stellar re-release of a working-class Street Punk classic that originally inspired legions of other musically like-minded rebels and misfits along the way (including One Man Army, Dropkick Murphys, Ducky Boys, and The Beltones). The corrosive, anger-soaked sounds of Those Unknown boil over with insightful lyrics, incendiary musicianship, and all-out raging insurgent attitude. It's a raucously rattling wake-up alarm for the fuzzy-brained, apathetic masses; a clamorous, riot-inciting political call-to-arms; a scowling, snarling outburst of sonic social upheaval that's sure to flame the fans of discontent and sow the seeds of disruption needed to bring the authoritarian powers that be to their knees. Off with their heads, Those Unknown-style!(CD)-Moser

Thrall "Lifer" *(Alternative Tentacles, POB 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092).* My RealOne Player deems this album "Noise Rock," yet it has nothing to do feedback or effect pedals that aren't distortion or overdrive-related. It sounds like Hardcore Punk to me with politics in place of the super-fast tempos; it surely receives the Biafra seal of approval by satirically utilizing audio from politicians and other speakers. Not my bag, but it could be yours.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Thursday "War All the Time" *(Island, 825 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10019).* So, I can safely say I am about to make more enemies than I have in the entire 10 years I have done this. *War All The Time* falls short. It isn't as good an album as *Full Collapse*, and coming out at the same time as contemporaries Thrice was a huge blow to this album. Thrice won the battle of 2003. The bands are even on the same label and touring together. Don't get me wrong, Thursday did **not** do a bad album; it just isn't as good as their last offering. The album tails pretty badly as well. It is front loaded to get the listener hooked and then peters out a bit. The ending of the album is just not as powerful as the beginning. It's like comparing *South of Heaven* to *Reign In Blood*. *South*... is a good album, but after *Reign*... you were let down. There is also the fact that when *Full Collapse* came out, it was something really fresh and seldom heard prior to that moment. Now we are all somewhat jaded by the influx of bands playing Screamo, so when someone you consider to be a leader of the movement doesn't live up to your expectations, it is a let down. That said, "Signals Over the Air" maybe one of my all-time favorite Thursday songs, so there is always some good with the bad. I would still recommend this album, but not first and foremost, for the band or the genre.(CD)-**Myk**

Treephort "Buy This Album or the Terrorists Win" *(Brand Name, POB 17533, Atlanta, GA 30316)*. Treephort goofily generates standard Pop Punk merriment, but what ultimately sets them apart from their spastic, snot-nosed contemporaries is the grunting, Lemmy Kilmeister-style vocals and the zany, synthesized New Wave keyboards. I dunno; it all seems much too quirky, disjointed, and silly for my brew-tainted tastes. I personally would rather hear complete utter silence emanating from my stereo speakers, so off this goes into the dust-strewn oblivion of a used CD bin at my favorite local music store. As far as the title's suggestion is concerned, you might want to let the terrorists win.(CD)-Moser

Trivium "Ember to Inferno" *(LifeForce, POB 938, 09009 Chemnitz, Germany)*. Trivium play a mix of old school Thrash Metal, Iron Maiden type classic Metal, and Metalcore ala Hatebreed. The vocals mostly remind me of Entombed, but there are some Swedish style sung choruses as well. The guitar work sounds like something straight out of Testament, and the song structures are very classic Metal in composition. Fans of As I Lay Dying, Hatebreed, newer Testament, and Bleeding Through should really enjoy this.(CD)-**Myk**

Truxton *(Substandard, POB 310, Berkeley, CA 94701)*. Great art, but it sounds like the same old Emo and Indie Rock mesh to me. I like Johannes Armentrout's airy, higher-register vocals, though.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

The Tyrades *(Broken Rekids, POB 460402,San Francisco, CA 94146-0402)*. Okay, art students, take off those legwarmers, throw out that Yeah, Yeah, Yeahs album and buy this! You just might learn something from a band like The Tyrades. This is their first full-length and it cured my hangover by making me drink again. Raw production, dirty chainsaw guitars, good rhythm section, and great raunchy female lead vocals. For those of you who are familiar with The Tyrades 7" releases you will be very pleased with this. With songs like "Message From the Operator," " Money Boy, Money Girl," and "Plastic Bag Baby" you just can't go wrong. (CD)-**Cyst Vicious**

Ultimate Fakebook "Electric Kissing Parties" *(Law of Inertia, 61 E. 8th St. #125, New York, NY 10003)*. Ultimate Fakebook is a band that still has not found its niche. They were big enough in the Kansas scene to jump to Epic Records for an album, yet not Pop enough to reach the mass market. Then the long-delayed split with Reggie & The Full Effect wound up not coming out until this year as a solo EP after a well-recorded but album for Initial Records. But *Electric Kissing Parties* is a re-release of their first album with new art and a bonus cover of Truck Stop Love's "Nothing Left to Start." Worthwhile.(CD)-**Paltrowitz**

Unbroken "The Death of True Spirit" *(Indecision, POB 6052, Garden Grove, CA 92846)*. The early '90s were a bleak period for modern Hardcore. They were a time of oversized t-shirts, reactionary PC rhetoric spouting, forays into half-baked spirituality, and a deluge of sluggish, bland mosh Metal bands touting "swiss cheese philosophies," as the Reverend Paul Bearer would say. Many of these acts have thankfully faded into relative obscurity. Of those associated with the then burgeoning "New Age" scene, few bands have aged as well as Unbroken. Straying from the aforementioned excess of their peers, Unbroken fused the jagged fracas of Slayer with a deliberate and layered mid-tempo riff scheme that provided the backdrop for bleak, poignant diatribes. Their highly influential *Life, Love, Regret* LP, which captured the band at their peak, and earlier *Ritual* album are captured here on this comprehensive retrospective. The distinctive wallop they brought to the fore has since been emulated by a whole generation of Metal-laced Hardcore bands. Despite one's subjective take on the vast majority of that progeny (mine isn't all that favorable), the Unbroken legacy has retained a powerful immediacy, nonetheless.(CD)-**Ramek**

US Bombs "Put Strength In the Final Blow" *(Disaster, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. How utterly fantastic! Duane Peters (roguish Bombs vocalist extraordinaire and acrobatic skateboard daredevil of the century) has remixed and repackaged the US Bombs' debut disc to the highest of excellence. This updated edition of *Put Strength In the Final Blow* possesses a hammering, more stripped-down sound with heavier emphasis on the bass and drums, it seems. Of course, Duane's snarling trademark vocals are as abrasive, snotty, and nasty as ever, and Kerry Martinez's savagely spluttering guitar rhythms and fiery, electrifying leads loose none of their urgent, wildly leaping luster. The songs are arranged in a different order than on the original release, and there are four bonus tunes (taken from the Bombs' *Scouts of America* double 7-inch) nicely added to give the entire package a more complete feel to it. The new-and-improved CD insert booklet has loads of visually stunning, action-packed photos, handwritten and typed lyric pages, and colorfully blunt liner notes and a song-by-song synopsis written by the dastardly scoundrel Duane himself. Whether you own an original copy of *Put Strength In the Final Blow* or not, I fervently recommend that you invest a few bucks into acquiring this updated version of the US Bombs' decade-old classic. It puts the venom, vitriol, and sneering, jaw-cracking energy back into Punk Rock; a much needed kick in the ass for today's trend-wallowing, mall-roaming punk wanna-bees.(CD)-Moser

V/A "Boston Scene Report" *(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)*. A mere eight songs in length, this explosively loud disc packs a rib-cracking punch that's as fast, savage, and furious as a flock of buzzards relentlessly attacking a mangled pile of fresh road-kill. Four bands with two songs each, and boy howdy, what a brief, but ear-blistering, trip through Beantown's Punk Rock scene it is! There's the leather-jacketed street snarl of Suspect Device, the angry old school insolence of Tommy and The Terrors, the manic Hardcore aggression of A-Team, and the trashy junkie-style Rock n' Roll of Fast Actin' Fuses. These are the brash, insurgent sounds of a youthful mob of hooligans aurally rampaging through the alleyways and cobblestone back streets of Boston. They're an uncontrollably pissed off menace to society, and I'm damn proud to witness their wrathful outrage firsthand with attentive ears held high and mighty.(CD)-Moser

V/A "It Could Be Worse..." *(Scoot at http://www.fast-and-cool.com)*. What an energetic and eclectic collection of ear-twisting sounds this is! It's an aurally diverse assortment of musically passionate emissions that vibrantly ranges from shimmering Indie Rock effervescence to hushed acoustic-tinged folksiness to robust backwoods psychedelia to extreme testicle-grinding Metal mayhem to electronic terroristic industrialism to inbred snaggle-toothed Country twang to good old-fashioned Punk Rock roguery (well-represented by a veritable cacophonous cornucopia of all its various sub-genres: Hardcore, Pop, Old School, Scum, and Street-style). The Red Scare, The Filthy Skanks, The Power Fantastic, Wozniak, Glamorous Glennis, The American Liberation Army, The Connotations, The Invisible Kids, Loop 13, The Unfortunate Sons, Wyndsong Moaning, Skara Brae, The Innuendo, Yanked, The Six-Shooters, Princess Die, and DJ God Damn Vs. The Filthy Skanks all give enthusiastic 100% skin-tingling performances. I've repeatedly blasted this wondrously frenzied disc all damn afternoon while euphorically shimmying and shaking and giddily be-bopping around the room like one of those spastic, smiley-faced dancing fools in the Charlie Brown "Peanuts" gang cartoons. Boy howdy, do I ever feel young, carefree, and invincible again!(CD)-**Moser**

V/A "Krazy Fest 6 Initial Records &Equal Vision Records Sampler" *(Equal Vision, POB 14, Hudson, NY 12534/Initial, POB17131, Louisville, KY 40217)*. This comp is so crazy that they purposely misspelled crazy ; now that's nuts! A lot of Emo and Hardcore on here which is sure to please fans of both genres. Stand out tracks by Black Cross, Bear vs. Shark, Roy, and The Hope Conspiracy. This stuff isn't really my bag, but it would be too easy to bash, therefore I won't. The

Krazy Fest itself actually sounds like a pretty good festival to check out.(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

V/A "MWHC: Disturbing the Peace" *(NGS, POB 334, Westmont, IL 60559)*. "What the fuck does MWHC" mean, you say? It means Mid-West Hard Core. The bands on this comp are: Insult to Injury, who play Hardcore, Johnny Vomit who play Hardcore, after a Hannibal Lecter sound clip... Dead End Path have a style that is closer to Death Metal than Hardcore. Disavow play....Hardcore! And they really don't care! The Struggle actually think they're going to break by covering "18 and Life;" I'd like to know how they can possibly keep a straight face playing this song live. If they ever play New York, I HAVE to go to see this!(CD)**-Grego**

V/A "NYHC: Where the Vile Things Are" *(NGS, POB 334, Westmont, IL 60559)*. Here's the lineup: Condition who do decent NY HC Street Punk...Carnage Krew who are bringing back a much needed sense of humor we haven't seen since Murphy's Law. Next up is Mortal Terror with some more standard NYHC. Finally we've got Pledge of Resistance with some very abrasive, tough-guy Hardcore.(CD)**-Grego**

V/A "New York City Rock N' Roll" *(Radical, 77 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012)*. Out of New York City's rat-infested alleyways, vomit-splattered gutters, graffiti-defiled subways, and the ash-ridden remains of the World Trade Center, the decadent, dirty, downtrodden essence of NYC Rock n' Roll has raucously persevered with a spirited grit unlike any other music scene in the entire universe. Not since NYC's trashy, hedonistic musical heyday when the New York Dolls, Ramones, Wayne/Jayne County, Blondie, Television, and The Heartbreakers outrageously reigned supreme has the Big Gotham Apple possessed such a sonically smokin' array of furiously rockin' kick-ass bands. This fire-breathing dragon of a disc collects 22 of the baddest, most bombastic groups on the trash rock scene today. And, brother, I'm here to tell you that each and every one of these monstrous Rock n' Roll combos sounds like they were born with a switchblade in one hand and a bottle of booze in the other and then raised through puberty in the notorious filthy bowels of CBGB's toilet. Sex Slaves, Detox Darlings, Joker Five Speed, Slunt, Firegods, Dirty Mary, The Drive, Grounded, The Nolan Gate, The Slags, and all the rest have effectively put the sex and drugs and brash, streetwise attitude back into Rock n' Roll. I'm beyond awed, and all I can say is that if America suddenly erupted in a full-fledged musical turf war, New York City would win it hands down with guitars a-blazing.(CD)**-Moser**

V/A "New York City Rock N' Roll" *(Radical, 77 Bleecker St., #C2-21, New York, NY 10012)*. This comp is what happens when good ideas go bad. New York has been blessed with so many great Punk and Rock n' Roll bands over the last 30 years that to release a comp filled with lousy, third-rate, present day Rock is appalling. It's not compiler Steven Blush's fault; he truly seems passionate about the bands he chose for this comp, as well as for the bands of yesteryear, but it's apparent that the well is running dry here in New York City. There are 22 bands and only two of them are really worth anybody's time, and even that number can be narrowed down to one great band—that being Bantam—which is fronted by Gina from the Lunachicks. The other, Skum, isn't very good at all, but since they wrote a song called "Big Black Cock" and they sing about, well, big black cock, I thought it really needed to be mentioned here. If you want to listen to New York City Rock n' Roll, try the New York Dolls, Dictators, Heartbreakers, Ramones, Testors, etc., etc.(CD)**-McClernon**

V/A "Playing 4 Square 3" *(Suburban Home, POB 40757, Denver, CO 80204)*. This is the third compilation release of a showcase featuring four incredible independent record labels including Better Looking, Lookout, Initial and Negative Progression. Ted Leo and The Pharmacists, Ultimate Fakebook, Counterfit, The Jealous Sound, and The Jazz June sum up this rendition of a wide range of indie darlings. It's a nice sounding compilation that you could listen to over and over.(CD)**-Cain**

V/A "The Sound of San Francisco" *(Alive, POB 7112, Burbank, CA 91510)*. Although I'm familiar with only one of the groups (Big Midnight) on this raucous and crunchy compilation, I can honestly say that I'm now a raving, maniacal fan of each and every band that sonically struts their stuff throughout the dazzling, mesmerizing, and spectacularly riveting journey that is *The Sound of San Francisco*. A grand total of 13 sonically unruly combos blaze a tempestuous path of distorted Garage Rock mania, noisy amphetamine-tweaked inner city Blues, and other psycho-crazed, fuzz-freaky Rock n' Roll madness. There's 17 explosive, earth-quaking numbers in all, feverishly presented by Nagg, The Coachwhips, Boyskout, Black Cat Music, Hotwire Titans, The Aktion, Low Flying Owls, the aforementioned Big Midnight, The Holy Kiss, Two Gallants, The Flakes, Mon Frere, and Young Trade. Judging by the thunderous grit of this disc, it sounds like the streets of San Francisco are once again rockin' with the utmost of trashed-out vibrancy, and the bands all have buzz bombs and bottle rockets in their hair instead of the hippy-drippy flowers from days of yore.(CD)**-Moser**

V/A "Take Action! Vol. 3" *(Sub City, POB 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409)*. The third installment of the *Take Action* series features a very diverse lineup. It's a two-disc set with bands like Good Riddance, The Explosion, Brendon Benson, and a shitload of Emo bands—Emo isn't really my cup of tea but it might satisfy the average Emo fan. Thursday, Thrice, Fall Out Boy, Poison The Well, Boy Sets Fire, are all on here. The CD lists numbers for suicide hotlines and ways to go about getting help if you or a loved one is feeling a bit down. I don't know how much this CD goes for, but it might be worth buying just for the Mike Park song alone.(CD)**-Cyst Vicious**

V/A "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Soundtrack" *(Nitrus, 45 West. 21st St., New York, NY 10010)*. A fine piece of cinematic history brought to life on the big screen once again, through the eyes of director Marcus Nispel. Hmmm…I liked the original better but hey, if there's room for any criticism might I be so bold as to make the following suggestion. How about if Leatherface was relocated? I mean, taken out of the state of Texas completely. Instead, the focus and motivation of his killing spree would shift, encouraging the spread of Leather's mayhem nationwide. The catch—he'd only be visiting the hometowns of the artists appearing on the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* motion picture soundtrack. Doing in not all, but most of those no-talent ass-monkeys appearing on the record, thus taking the first step in cleansing the music industry of any garbage that missed collection on Monday and Thursday. How's that for a sequel?(CD)**-Manic**

V/A Derita Sisters / Cockroach Candies *(Trash 2001, Postfach 101653, D-42616 Bottrop, Germany)*. Both bands on this here sizzlin' slab of vinyl blast a loud, fast, and unruly assault of Punk Rock sounds. Derita Sister do it down 'n' dirty with loads of whirlwind-paced rhythms choreographed by an army of raging buzzsaw guitars. Those bratty brudda Ramones were doing something similar to this at CBGB in the purgatorial summer of '76, I do believe. Cockroach Candies sound like the insolent Satan-spawned bastard children of Naked Aggression, Discount, and X if they were all the lone mutant survivors of an apocalyptic nuclear holocaust. The lively, dueling girl/guy vocals are backed by a megaton explosion of incessantly rumbling instrumentation. All in all, you get six songs and seven inches of pure punk joy with this viciously rockin' collection.(7")**-Moser**

V/A Kalibas/Rune *(Relapse, 1720 State Rd., Upper Darby, PA 19082)*. Kalibas is total chaos unleashed on guitar strings, Grindcore that mixes the twin voice attack of screeches and growls, with blistering drum fills you'd find on a Human Remains album and guitar riffs like you'd find on a Circle of Dead Children album. There isn't one soft note, not one sign of weakness in this onslaught. Rune is the weaker of the two bands. The vocals aren't as powerful and the guitars seem to rely more on chords than Kalibas does. The drums are less precise and more generic sounding than their CD mate as well. The band is heavy, but their songs are structured more like a straight Grind band, and they just don't hold up to the tracks on the same CD. Rune is not a bad band, they just aren't as appealing as Kalibas in several areas.(CD)-**Myk**

The Vacancy "EP" *(A-F, POB 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)*. When I first glanced at the CD cover and insert booklet, I automatically assumed that The Vacancy is an insurgent, old school Punk Rock band. I was overwhelmingly wrong with my initial judgement based on appearance alone. The Vacancy energetically unfurls an intricately pieced together cluster of melodic, poetic, and introspective Punk that's as brilliant and shimmering as it is catchy and captivating. The vocals are sensitive and passionate in an Emo-whine kind of way, and the instrumentation is lush, tantalizing, and grandly riveting. I usually shun such emotionally overwrought sonic expressionism, but The Vacancy has absolutely without a doubt dazzled my ears to the brink of orgasmic glee. So there ya have it; I must be mellowing with age.(CD)-**Moser**

Vue "Down For Whatever" *(RCA, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036)*. If you haven't heard of Vue already, I'm sure you'll hear more of them in the future. Vue has that genuine indie sound that is very successful lately. A little more than that, they have a female keyboardist, and a raw, dark, psychedelic side. Vue is interesting and liberal, and not as boring and fabricated as other bands that sound similar.(CD)-**Cain**

The Von Zippers "The Crime Is Now" *(Estrus, POB 2125, Bellingham, WA 98225)*. This is the Von Zippers third full-length record and it's more hip than anything. It's fun, dancing, Siren Festival-material music. They claim to be inspired by James Brown and the Meters. All I hear is the sound of the White Stripes but a lot more mature and older sounding, and they probably have more credibility, too. The Von Zippers are fun and politically conscious at the same time. If you're a fan of hipster kind of indie-sounding music, you might want to give this a listen.(CD)-**Cain**

Watch Them Die *(Century Media, 2323 W. El Segundo Blvd, Hawthorne, CA 90250)*. With a background that ready like a heroin punk top ten list, Watch Them Die was destined for greatness. Ojo Rojo, El Dopa, Grimple, Word Salad, and Buzzoven all have contributed this unbelievable Thrash/Death attack from Oakland, California. While fans of any or all of those bands will not be disappointed by Watch Them Die, this isn't just another regurgitation from a scene that helped spawn Neurosis either. This really brings to mind some of the early Combat stuff like the first two Death albums, as well as the Bay Area Thrash of old, like early Metallica albums. This is a punishing mix of Thrash, Death Metal, Grind and ABC No Rio Punk. A more metallic Discharge comes to mind as I listen to this, as well as the band Vio-Lence for some reason. Whatever roots you hear while listening to this, it really is that good and will appeal to fans of the members' charter bands, as well as bands like Damad.(CD)-**Myk**

The Weakerthans "Reconstruction Site" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. I don't get this band at all. I had heard **of** them prior to this release, but never **heard** them. I was always lead to believe they were Punk Rock, similar to most bands you would find on Fat Wreck. They are nothing like that, at least on this album. This is closer to Ryan Adams and Uncle Tupelo than any Punk albums I own. It's Rock and Roll with some Southern twinges to the songs. If it wasn't for the fact that there is a band behind him, I would venture to say this is singer/songwriter type stuff. It at times reminds me of the band The Kingston Trio, a Folk band that my father listened to when I was a kid. There is a lot of Beat Generation feel to this album, but it really isn't my thing. Maybe fans of the Supersuckers' Country album will dig this, but it's too mellow for my liking.(CD)-**Myk**

The Weakerthans "Reconstruction Site" *(Epitaph, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026)*. Since their formation after the departure of John Samson from Propaghandi, Canada's The Weakerthans have been media darlings, with their previous two full-lengths garnering rave reviews and words and phrases such as "brilliant" and "lyrical genius" being passed around more often than my friend's sister (shit, that was wrong of me). With their third full-length however, released on Epitaph, it seems the Weakerthans are on the brink of mass popularity. Combining equal elements of Punk, Folk, Country, and Pop, *Reconstruction Site* is the most cohesive, complete record the band has recorded thus far, and while the recording itself is extremely well-done, with a big-time production sound, it somehow doesn't sound overly-polished. Lyrically, Samson is at the top of his game, with themes focusing on love, politics, Michael Foulcoult and Winnipeg. Oh yeah, "The Reasons" and "Reconstruction Site" would be top ten selling singles in a world not riddled with over-produced, soon to come out of the closet boy bands and such ilk. If you love music in general, you need this.(CD)-**McClernon**

The Weirdos "We Got the Neutron Bomb: Weird World Volume Two" *(Frontier, POB 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353)*. Twelve years after *Weird World Volume One* was released, the forever inspiring Frontier Records crew has unleashed this sonically colorful second installment of wacky Weirdo madness. Whereas the first volume collected 14 demo, B-side, and alternate recordings of well-known Weirdo material from 1977-1981, this particular compilation crams 16 rare, live, and unreleased songs that span the entire Weirdos recording career thus far (from a theatrical high-voltage practice session in 1977 to their crazily rockin' comeback album, *Condor*, in 1989/90). In between, you get the boiling, hyperactive rant of "Destroy All Music" (the A-side of their first single), the original Dangerhouse 7-inch version of "We Got the Neutron Bomb," a raucously spastic cover of Love's "7 & 7 Is," and so much more. It's a cacophonous cornucopia of primitive musical styles (including Rockabilly, Surf, and drunken good-time Rock n' Roll) frenetically punked up and then rode rough and hard to the brink of all-out insanity via the mad, mad, mad flamboyance of The Weirdos. It's an articulate, witty, contagious, and awe-inspiring trip into a deeply depraved state of bone-shaking audio outrageousness, and it's ultimately proof positive that The Weirdos were one of the most influential Punk Rock trendsetters within the intensely eclectic California scene in the late '70s and early '80s. "I want what I want," and damn it, I want more *Weird World*.(CD)-**Moser**

Worn Thin "Remnants of What Could Have Been" *(Youngblood, 217 W.Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522)*. With insightful interpersonal lyricism and a straight forward approach encapsulating both a distinctive youth crew bent and a rousing early '80s Hardcore Punk feel, Worn Thin tear through these six songs with enthusiasm and verve. Their methodically layered, well executed shout-along laden formula does them justice throughout. This is a particularly solid 7" (now on CD), with a subtle anthemic quality to the otherwise streamlined, albeit memorable, fray.(CD)-**Ramek**

Zero Hour "Metamorphosis" *(Sensory, POB 388, Voorhees, NJ 08043)*. This is a re-issue of the band's first album that they released themselves in 1998. Zero Hour's last album, *Towers of Avarice*, was actually one of the few true Prog Metal albums that I can admit to actually liking in the last couple of years. It had enough power and creativity and minimized the cheese factor enough to get me interested for a serious listen. I even entered the disc into my personal collection as something I would keep. Unfortunately, I don't feel the same way about this one. While the band has the talent, this disc (and I understand it is their debut) is just too all over the place. It's like five guys starting a song at different times. Discordance can be good, but not at the expense of song structure. It really sounds like the band just hadn't quite found their way yet. It isn't as annoying as say Rhapsody, but it doesn't hold a candle to the band's later work. Fortunately, even on this release, Erik Rosvold's vocals do not reach into the cheesy stereotypical Metal arena; he **can** sing and has good range, but I'm just into these songs. Give the band's epic *Towers...* a spin, because this is more for Prog devotees than your average Metal listener.(CD)-**Myk**

Zox "Take Me Home" *(Zox Music. www.zoxband.com)*. Zox is a College Rock band that formed in 1999 with four friends from Brown University. They have a Rastafarian vibe and sound a lot like Sublime with a violin. It's well-blended music, very united and mature for a band of this genre. I'm not really a fan of this type of music, but I can't say it's bad. So if you like bands like Goldfinger, Dispatch, Guster, Common, and the Sugar Hill Gang, Zox has been the opening band for all of them.(CD)-**Cain**

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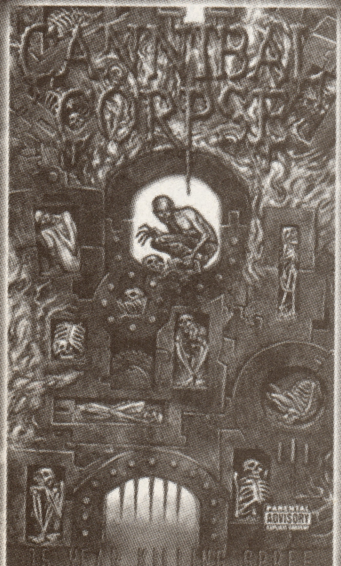

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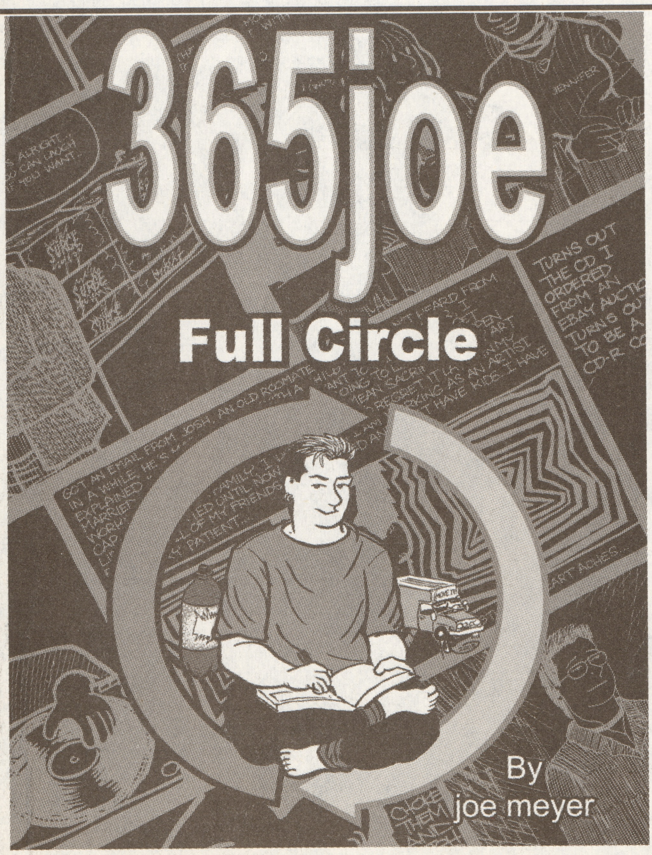

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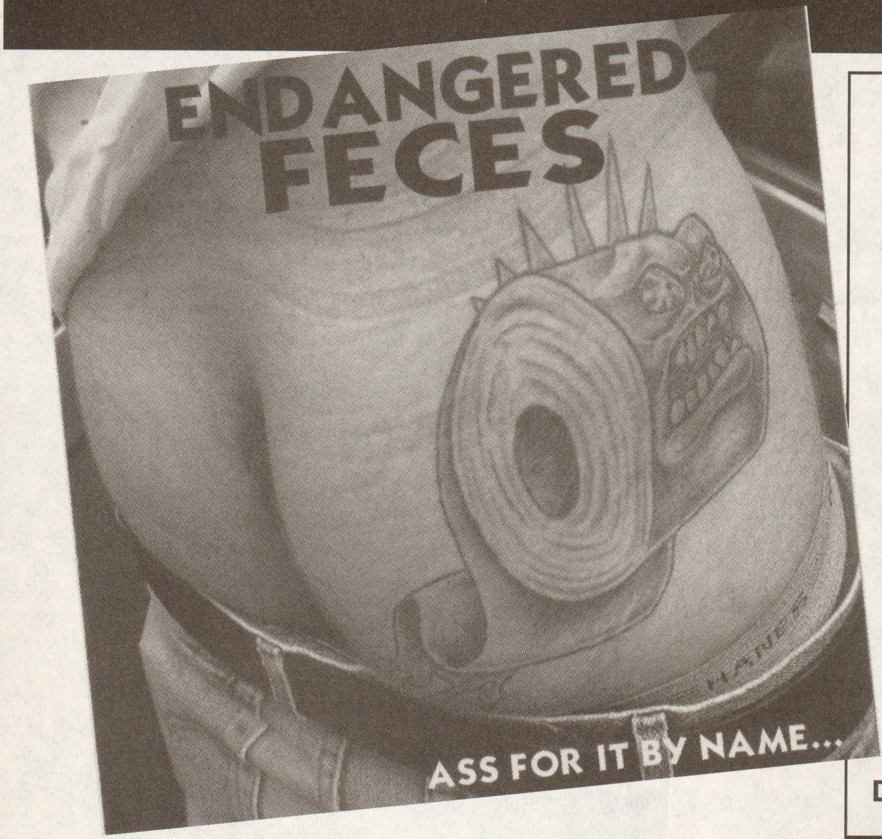

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